"... Nothing to Offer but Tears . . ." *An Editorial* *(Turn to page 4)*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

May 21, 1940

Mr. President:

This is not our war!

an open letter

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Between Ourselves

Write Your Own Story

"ARE we going to get in?" You heard that last week, didn't you? They asked that all over America. President Roosevelt posed that question last week—and promptly supplied his own answer. On the opposite page you will find *our* answer. Tragic, isn't it, that NEW MASSES is the only weekly in America saying "NO" to the President? Where would that be said if this magazine were not alive?

Think that over.

Last week Anonymous Newspaperman thought it over and wrote: "If I had a prayer it would be to keep your weekly alive and shouting forever." You remember what he said, don't you? "I hope that you get a lot more one-buck guys like me," he said. "A few thousand can do the job, and I know there are thousands."

But only hundreds answered, not thousands. That is why we must make this appeal this week. You have helped us now to the tune of $15,993. We need a total of $25,000 to see the current fiscal year through. Nine thousand more to go—but it is a crucial nine thousand. Without it we are hamstrung, straitjacketed—uncertain of the next issue. We want to close this drive, to have the wherewithal to get on with our main business: keeping your son, your husband, your father, out of Europe's trenches.

The "one-buck guys" have the destiny of America in their hands. They can write their own story. It's not predestined that the story be written the way the President wants it.

Your surest way of having your story, the story of peace, written is to keep NEW MASSES alive. Your "one buck"—one from each of you thousands—can do it.

What do you say, "one-buck" America?

(Please turn to page 26)

THE NM family has had an addition: Tom Sillen, seven days old, weight (at this writing) eight and a quarter pounds, blue eyes, coal-black hair, and a beautifully cleft chin just like his papa Sam's. Mama Janet is getting along wonderfully. Sam, who recently retired from NM's editorial board to complete a book, will at the drop of a hat tell you how marvelous fatherhood is. He has already purchased a camera. Look out—here come those baby pictures.

Because of illness, William Gropper was prevented from contributing his weekly page to this issue of NM. We are happy to report that the artist will be able to resume his contributions next week.

Players of the Flatbush Arts Theater are very generously giving NM a special benefit preview performance of Norman Rosten's new and exciting play, *This Proud Pilgrimage,* which will be presented at the Heckscher Theater, at 1 East 104th St., NYC. The preview performance, which is sponsored by NM Readers League, will take place Wednesday evening, June 5. Tickets are priced at 55 cents, 83 cents, and $1.10, and are available at the NM [illegible] Fourth Ave., corner of 31st St. For additional information call CAledonia 5-3076.

Who's Who

AL RICHMOND is managing editor of the *People's World,* published in San Francisco. . . . James Morison is a regular contributor to NM. . . . Cesar Falcon was one of Spain's leading newspapermen during the Spanish war. . . . Constancia de la Mora is author of the best seller *In Place of Splendor.* . . . Adam Lapin is NM and *Daily Worker* correspondent in Washington. . . . Isidor Schneider is former literary editor of NM and author of *From the Kingdom of Necessity.* . . . Rolfe Humphries was co-editor with M. J. Bernadete of the loyalist anthology, *And Spain Sings.* . . . Cora MacAlbert has contributed to NM before, as well as to the *New Yorker,* the *New Republic, Coronet,* and other publications. . . . Lydia Gibson is an artist well known to readers of the old *Masses.* . . . Lou Cooper is a young New York composer and pianist.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXV MAY 21, 1940 NUMBER 9

Mr. President: This Is Not Our War

AN OPEN LETTER

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Your address to the Pan-American Scientific Congress removes the last vestige of doubt —if any still remained—that for you the decision of war or peace has already been made. You have set your course toward military participation in the European war. You have already involved the country economically; you are preparing to involve it financially. Beyond that there is only one more step to be taken. We are not in the war today only because public opposition is too strong. Your May 10 speech, like all your recent acts and utterances, was designed to overcome that opposition, to snare it with imaginary fears, to render it impotent with trickery and deceit. You deliberately appealed to blind prejudice, you incited popular passion with visions of non-existent dangers, you cunningly hinted a religious crusade in behalf of "Christian civilization," hypocritically describing yourself as a pacifist in order to lure the people into following your war policy.

These are strong words, Mr. President. But when America's peace is being bartered away for a mess of profits, when our liberties are being delivered into the hands of Martin Dies, every man and woman who truly loves civilization and freedom and democracy must speak out. To keep silent in the face of what is happening in Washington is to become an accomplice in a crime, a hideous crime that is being prepared against our people.

Mr. President, you know that there is not a country in the world that threatens the people of these United States. In your speech you made a parallel between the distances traversed by Alexander and Julius Caesar and the distances between Europe and the United States, between Africa and South America. You know that there is not the slightest parallel between the conquests of Alexander and Caesar and the task of transporting a modern army to attack our coastlines. You know what your military experts know: that the territory of the United States is practically impregnable to attack from the Atlantic or Pacific. When you talk therefore about the danger to America, your mind is actually roaming elsewhere, toward Wall Street's dollar empire in Europe and Asia. It is not the men and women who grow our wheat and dig our coal and make our steel that you are concerned about, but the rubber and tin of the East Indies, the oil of Mexico, the lucrative trade with Japan, the stocks and bonds that link America's Wall Street with London's City.

The American people are emphatically opposed to any foreign adventures. Eighty-eight percent of them, according to a *Fortune* survey, want to stay out of war no matter what happens abroad —even, Mr. President, if your beloved English and French fellow imperialists should be losing. The people remember the promises of the last war when you were assistant secretary of the navy. When the war was over they realized how cruelly they had been deceived. The people have no desire to repeat that experience. They have their own war to fight—a war against poverty and insecurity, a war against the capitalist barbarism that blots out civilized living for two-thirds of our population.

The American people voted for you in 1936 because they believed you when you promised to lead them in this domestic fight. They believed you when you warned in your Chautauqua speech against the fool's gold of war profits. They believed you when you said at Madison Square Garden: "Today there is war and rumor of war. We want none of it." They believed you in 1937 when you urged concerted action by the peace-loving nations to halt the warmakers. (They did not know that two years later you would be seeking to align this country with one group of warmakers against another group while fomenting hatred against the greatest peace-loving nation in the world, the Soviet Union.) Even after the European war had begun the people believed you when you said: "Our acts must be guided by one single hardheaded thought—keeping America out of this war."

You have betrayed that trust, Mr. President. You have led the people to the promised land—and it proves to be the inferno of war. You have turned your back not only on peace, but on the whole program of economic and social advance embraced under the term New Deal. And you have turned your back on democracy as well. Your Department of Justice is harassing radicals, prosecuting trade unions, and building under the sinister J. Edgar Hoover a Gestapo that is preparing a new streamlined edition of the Palmer Red raids. Your Jerome Frank proposes a wartime plan, lifted from England's J. M. Keynes, for the forced expropriation of America's underpaid millions and the forced reduction of consumption after the fashion of the Nazi "guns instead of butter" dictum.

No wonder big business no longer rants at "that man in the White House." No wonder the Wall Street tycoons whom you once proudly described as "unanimous in their hate for me" are beginning to regard with favor the idea of a third term.

The greatest threat to American democracy comes not from abroad, but from within, from the present policies of your administration. That is why we consider it our duty and the duty of every sincere democrat and friend of peace to rouse the people against those policies and against the party behind them. The Republican Party is no less a party of war and reaction and it agrees substantially with your aims. What the 88 percent of the people who oppose involvement in foreign wars under any circumstances need is a peace party. The power of those numbers, if united, can compel even the President of the United States to retreat, can win a victory for peace in the November elections.

NEW MASSES calls for the organization of this peace party. The trade unions must be the backbone of this movement and John L. Lewis has pointed the way by suggesting a conference of representatives of labor, the farmers, the youth movement, the Negro people, and the old-age pension groups.

The words of Eugene V. Debs in his great anti-war speech at Canton, O., twenty-two years ago are still fresh today:

> They want our eyes focused on the Junkers in Berlin so that we will not see those within our own borders. I hate, I loathe, I despise Junkers and Junkerdom. I have no earthly use for the Junkers of Germany, and not one particle more use for the Junkers in the United States.

We have faith in the people. We know their potential strength. Today hundreds of thousands are organized under the banner of the Yanks Are Not Coming. We shall work to rally millions. We know, Mr. President, that your system, the system of Hitler and Churchill and Reynaud is plunging to destruction. To the mothers and sons of America living under the shadow of a terrible fear we bring the vision of a different life. Out of the blood and agony the people will find the path to a warless world. The future belongs to socialism.

THE EDITORS.

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"Nothing to Offer but Tears . . ."

Churchill said it and both sides mean it. The great fiasco has begun. Betrayal by the Social-Democrats. There is another way and mankind will take it. An editorial article.

THE war has undergone a decisive change. For eight months the Germans had rested on their haunches in Central Europe. Surrounded by small states, through whose neutrality they were able to nullify the Allied blockade, the Germans kept the Allies at the circumference of Europe. It was the Allied powers who during this period insisted upon extending the theater of war. When compelled to meet the British challenge in Norway, the Germans did so with all the power, the daring, the precision of arms and air force at their command. On the face of it Norway was a great victory for the Germans.

But Norway was also a turning point; hereafter, unless fields for battle were opened in the Balkans, the major struggle must take place in the West. While the submarine bases and strategic airdromes off the Norwegian coast enabled the Nazis to undermine the British control of the North Sea, Norway of itself did not suffice as a strategic junction of the war. And both belligerents apparently hesitated to disturb the Balkan status quo. The Soviet conversations with Yugoslavia, the close relations with Bulgaria, the presence of the Red Army in the mountain passes of Carpatho-Ukraine—such factors would temper the enthusiasm of any imperialist power. Even the President of the United States seems to have understood this well. Italy's entrance into the war, especially in a Balkan campaign, might precipitate events which the entire capitalist order would bitterly regret.

Time was passing, and time is a neutral that has close relations with the USSR. Whatever advantages Germany still retained from the superiority of her air force, her food reserves, the Norwegian success, the confusion and dismay on the Allied side might be canceled by a few months' delay.

REVERSED ROLES

Thus a reversal of roles has taken place. Realizing the insecurity of their own position, the Nazis attempt to wring the greatest possible advantage from the present insecurity of their opponents. Less than eighteen months after the Munich agreement gave the Germans a free hand in Central Europe, the architects of Munich are at each other's throats. How times have changed! Only a year ago last March, a quiet-spoken man named Joseph Stalin observed that the British tories were playing a very dangerous game with Hitler that might end in serious fiasco for them. Stop any man in the street today—in London, Paris, or New York—and he will admit that Stalin was right.

"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat," says Mr. Churchill twenty-six years after 1914. Nor does the Fuehrer speak with much greater confidence. Even before the very first battle, he invokes the judgment of the next thousand years. Immediate victory is out of the question for the Allies, the ultimate outcome very uncertain. But there is also no enthusiasm for this war in Germany. The policy of blackmail has crumbled.

Instinctively in this tragic moment our sympathy goes out to the peoples on both sides of the battle. Our sympathy flows to the women and children shuddering in the air raid shelters, to the soldiers dying many miles from their wives and mothers, to the innocent peoples, who stand aghast as their superb technical heritage, their scientific achievement, the monuments to their own love and toil, become the prey of ruthless destruction from both sides of the Rhine.

All of us who warned against this war, who picketed the consulates, who collected signatures, attended congresses, who carried placards in the rain—no matter on whatever else we may disagree—all of us will nevertheless reach the common conclusion: this war might have been averted. It did not have to be this way. All of us who worked so hard that Spain might live—we were right. Spain might have been the Waterloo of the warmakers; every statesman who shares the guilt for Spain's defeat shares the guilt for this war too.

But the guilt lies deeper still. It does not depend simply on which of the mean statesmen of Europe marched their armies first. The entire mechanism of capitalist property relations, the search for markets, the antagonisms of trade, the feverish compulsion of export, the merciless exploitation of the colonies—everything that flows from the system of private profit—this is what lies at the root of Europe's troubles. Yes, capitalism erected a magnificent technical edifice—which now in its death throes it makes every effort to destroy. Capitalism boasts of raising the living standards of the masses; but how much of it ever benefited the masses? And how much of it will be left after this war is over?

It is for this reason that the betrayal of the French and British Social-Democrats is so enormous. They have defiled the meaning of socialism, defiled the elementary truths of Marxism. They have misled the working people of France and Britain into the defense of a spurious liberty, a fraudulent civilization, a mockery of human dignity. They have helped to perpetuate and degrade the conditions of British life. Last week the full incompetence of the British ruling classes was stripped naked in Parliament; the whole world gazed upon the emperors without clothes on, the mean old men recriminating with one another, forfeiting by their own admission the last iota of prestige among decent people. Instead of taking advantage of the breach in British capital, the Labor Party obscenely rushed in to fill the breach. Instead of rallying England's masses in militant struggle against the engineers of her misfortunes, instead of giving the example which would shake all Europe, the Labor lieutenants of British capital fawned before their betters. Under his majesty's trembling scepter, the Labor leaders burdened the British people with the task of salvaging the empire at a moment when salvation lay in overthrowing it. Their miserable counterparts have done the same in France, the same as their brethren once did in Germany. The rank and file of British labor submitted fifty resolutions to the Bournemouth conference this week, demanding an end to the political truce, demanding a struggle against the national government; instead the Labor politicians have been given five seats in the Cabinet, alongside of whom? —Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Halifax, Lord Lloyd, Duff Cooper, Winston Churchill—the enemies of British labor.

WAR PROMOTERS

And in our own country the press already pants for war. The pulpits invoke their own private God to sound the reveille. The President chooses this moment to frighten the public with a new mythology, namely that this country faces air raids, the threat of invasion from abroad. For weeks and weeks we were told that Germany menaced Iceland, that if Holland were invaded the Dutch West Indies might embroil us with the Germans; and yet it is the British who have calmly appropriated Iceland, and French marines have landed at Curacao. Mr. Jerome Frank has already drawn the plans to make the people shell out for the war. The army and navy outstretch the palm, and the stock exchanges anticipate the juicy dividends with unashamed cheering. Even the liberal intellectuals will not be left behind. The *Nation* and the *New Republic* seek the proper phrase to sanctify this war.

At such a moment NEW MASSES restates the fundamental assumptions of its conviction, confident that millions are themselves seeking to affirm the message of our pages.

First, we do not believe, in fact we deny, that the alternative in Europe is a victory for either Hitler or the Allied powers. It is not true that this is the alternative confronting the peoples of Europe on both sides, and therefore this false choice must not be made the basis for destroying our own neutrality.

The masters of England and France are compelled to transform their economies, their social structures, their military apparatus, in the fascist image. Thus they hope to maintain themselves against either a rival imperialism or the inevitable advance of socialism. Al-

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ready there is not much choice between the leadership of Leon Jouhaux and that of Robert Ley. There is not much choice between the concentration camps on one side of the Rhine and on the other. There is not much to choose from in the inhuman hours of the German and French working day, the abrogation of civil liberties, the violation of the rights to speech and assembly. Hitler's Reichstag is a travesty of representative government; but the last elections for the House of Commons in Great Britain took place in November 1935, when the Conservatives pledged to honor and strengthen the League of Nations against aggression! The French Chamber of Deputies was elected in the spring of 1936 on the program of the *front populaire*. The Communist deputies have been barred, although they represent a million and a half Frenchmen; elections have been indefinitely postponed; the same will probably happen in England, too. Do intelligent people really think that the French and British ruling classes will save democracy in Europe while at the same time they destroy their own? Is there anything that Czechs and Slovaks can really expect from Chamberlain and Halifax and Daladier? Is there anything the German people can really expect from Duff Cooper? Can any Frenchman feel secure while Jean Ybarnegaray, the man-Friday of de la Rocque's fascist crowd, now takes his seat in the Cabinet?

ANOTHER WAY

If the alternative of the victory of one side or the other in this war has already disappeared for the peoples of both belligerents, then surely that alternative has disappeared for us. The fact is that there *is* another way. It is the only way: the sensible, the humane, the civilized, the rational, the workable way of socialism. How soon can we get socialism? That is the real question. How soon will the peoples of either side by their heroic example illuminate the path to Europe's liberation? This is the only outcome worth working for everywhere.

We flatter ourselves, we make ourselves look foolish and sinister to the millions of Latin Americans, the colonial peoples, China, India, if we think that when America goes to war the freedom of small nations, the liberation of weaker peoples, the reign of fruitful commerce will then be assured. The truth is that the men who rule America calculate to win this war for themselves. Already they have squeezed the fruit of neutrality dry. It is they who have profited from the policy of helping the Allies "short of war." It is their aircraft, chemical, steel, munitions, textile, and shipping industries which have paid them heavy dividends these last nine months. And who are these men? Are they not the same who have brought the ten-year plague upon America? Is it not their greed which has circumscribed the frontiers of American life for five million youth? Which has dispossessed a generation of Joads? Is it not their barbaric racism which nurtures a thousand Bigger Thomases? Have we not been fighting these men all along the line at home? Then why go to war for them? Why enable them to escape those problems which they cannot solve by paying for *their* war by the desolation in *our* living standards, by the destruction of *our* trade unions, by the blackout of *our* civil liberties, by the forfeit of *our* lives?

Not only do the men who rule America calculate to emerge as the undisputed arbiters of the entire capitalist world, transforming even their allies into subordinate positions, but they reckon on employing the American doughboy in the most criminal possible way—to halt the inevitable advance of socialism in Europe. Take the President's latest speech to the Pan-American Scientific Congress in which he asks whether we Americans "can continue our peaceful construction if all the other continents in all the world embrace by preference or by compulsion a wholly different principle of life." He asks the question, and himself replies: "I think not."

Do we fully realize what the President is talking about? He says that if other peoples embrace by *preference* (which he will most surely call compulsion) a different principle of life, why then, the American people must be called upon to stop them! Wilson saved the world for democracy, that is, for capitalism; Roosevelt desires to save the world from genuine democracy, that is, from socialism. Yes, that is why the President is rushing with such headstrong abandon to prepare the nation for war. He knows how thin the fabric of capitalist civilization has been worn in Europe. He wants the American people to become the gendarmes of reaction throughout the world, and he promises that if the rest of the world adopts a different principle of life, by which he means the socialist way, he will do everything in his power to keep the American people from emulating the example of their fellow men abroad.

So that if we wish to assure and strengthen our democracy (such as it is) in this country, we must of necessity stay out of this war. And if we wish to give the peoples of Europe a chance to end the misery into which capitalism has plunged them, it is our deepest duty of international solidarity to keep American troops, materials, and arms from Europe. Yes, the peoples of Europe need the American people as allies; we serve them best by holding strong the fortresses of our own democracy, the labor and progressive movement, the banner of democratic arts and letters, the organizations of the people.

But the people of the United States also need allies; not to get us into the war but to stay out of it. In all the frantic newspaper discussion of the last few days, little has been said about the Soviet Union. No one pauses to observe that while the lowlands of Europe are overrun by horror, the larger part of Europe stands aside; the greatest military power, the strongest air force, the soundest economic order, the most virile, expanding peoples of Europe have found a way to preserve the peace of their own country, to secure their own frontiers. That is the way of socialism, and it exercises a mighty magnetic power, preventing, as though by its own example, the spread of warfare to larger areas and more peoples.

No man in London and Paris today has anything but bitterness for those statesmen who deliberately threw away the chance of an agreement with the Soviet Union, an agreement whereby this war could not, and never would have taken place. And here in America our statesmen who chatter much of their devotion to peace (even of their pacifism!) are nevertheless proceeding to alienate, irritate, insult, isolate a nation that stretches over one-sixth of the earth, the mightiest nation next to our own.

The American navy cruises halfway between Hawaii and the Philippines; the Philippine high commissioner, Francis B. Sayre, negotiates warily with Japan, while the War and Navy departments keep in readiness the weapons with which they seek to dominate the Dutch East Indies. Speculation on a Far Eastern war is rife; a war for rubber and tin, a war for petroleum and quinine. But does anyone doubt that a simple rapprochement between the USSR and the United States is worth a thousand battleships in the Pacific? Do we have to labor the point that American cooperation with the USSR in Europe—the two mightiest powers on earth—could bring the war itself to a complete halt, could upset the calculations and frustrate the inflamed ambitions on every side? One does not have to agree with the internal policy of the Soviet Union, with every aspect of its achievements, to realize the latent power for peace that lies in the collaboration of these two great states—a power that will keep the peace of the Americas and at the same time bring peace to Europe.

SOLIDARITY, RESISTANCE

These are the positive elements of our faith. This is the bedrock of our convictions. We stand for solidarity with all the peoples of Europe. We stand for resistance and uncompromising opposition to the ambitions of the American capitalist class. We affirm that it is not by armaments, not by navies and battleships, not by oppressive taxation, not by the sacrifice of our liberties and living standards that the American national interest can be served. America needs a policy, a progressive foreign policy, a policy which returns to progress in domestic affairs, a policy which seeks out allies who have shown their own ability to keep their own peace—in the first place, the USSR.

There is no cause for panic. On the contrary, there is every cause for hope, for faith in the great capacity of the American people to steer a clear path. Lenin says somewhere that "The experiences of war, like the experiences of every crisis in history, of every great calamity and every sudden turn in human life stun and break some people, *but they enlighten and harden others. . . .*" To enlighten and harden—that is the common task of the present hour.

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Tom Dewey's Gilt-edged Glamour

Barbara Giles estimates the Republicans' leading candidate. "His speeches are older than Hoover's, at least as old as Harding's." Wall Street's boy of Owosso, Mich.

UNTIL a month or so ago many GOP leaders regarded Thomas E. Dewey as a precocious peewee with enough G-man glamour to rate him, possibly, a second place on the national ticket. Today they are yelling "Stop Dewey" almost as loudly as they cry "Beat FDR." Considering the current Republican demand for glamour, this is queer. To you and me Mr. Dewey may look as glamorous as Herbert Hoover in rompers, but not according to his front-page reputation, which is that of an American Dream hero. He is the smalltown boy who stormed the big-city ramparts of corruption, slew the giants of sin, and shamed the Whore of Babylon. He is, as you prefer, Dick Tracy, Mr. Deeds come to town, Saint George, or young Lochinvar out of Owosso, Mich. All America knows his Hollywood counterpart, the fearless young district attorney who, singlehanded, busts up the rackets and slings politicians behind bars. In addition to this, Mr. Dewey is young and handsome. What else does the party of Cal Coolidge want in the way of glamour? Indelible lipstick?

Why do so many Republican leaders want to stop him? Their aversion to the district attorney of New York has little to do with his public character. Some of it is based on the routine ambitions and jealousies of inner-party politics, more of it on a pure and potent dislike of the man Dewey. This last may come as a shock to radio listeners who have confused the boy cop with Knight Galahad, but it is a fact nevertheless and there are plenty of reasons for it. I shall deal with these later. The important thing at the moment is that Thomas E. Dewey has led the Republican presidential aspirants in the primaries held thus far, exhibiting a vote-getting ability that impresses and alarms his party enemies. His victory at the Philadelphia convention is by no means assured, of course. Ohio's Senator Taft has been quietly picking up delegates in the South, Michigan's Vandenberg is still in the running, while Wendell Willkie and even darker horses manage to raise considerable dust. Besides, a nag that runs so far in the lead at the beginning is sometimes pulled up short on the home stretch. But we must consider Mr. Dewey as he is at this writing, a very possible presidential candidate of one of the nation's two major political parties. As such what does he offer the American people for their votes? How does it differ from the wares of his Republican rivals or of FDR and other donkey-riders?

BRIGHT BOY

The Horatio Alger chapters of Tom Dewey's career begin after his arrival in New York at the age of twenty-one. Before that he was just a bright boy with a fine singing voice who had studied law at the University of Michigan and music in Chicago, and couldn't choose between the bar and the concert stage. For a time the latter won and he came to Manhattan for further voice instruction. But Dewey, as we shall see, was never a man to captain his soul without keeping simultaneous watch on all decks. He continued to study law, at Columbia, while preparing for a musical career, and soon after obtaining his LL.B. he was doing small but secure speaking parts in a Manhattan law firm. In just six years, marked by diligence and mounting income, he attained the position of chief assistant US attorney. Luck was largely responsible for the appointment. While working with Dewey on a law case, George Z. Medalie was made US attorney for the southern district of New York and he placed the twenty-nine-year old lawyer on his staff. When Medalie resigned in 1933, Dewey got his post, from which he himself resigned soon after in order to resume a private practice that brought him about $50,000 in two years. From this lucrative if inconspicuous occupation he turned, after some persuasion, to the gang-busting career which opened in 1935 when Governor Lehman made him a special prosecutor commissioned to clean up the rackets. Within two years his conviction of underworld luminaries in poultry, trucking, restaurant, baking rackets, in policy games and prostitution, were making his name—to say nothing of his black mustache and bright eyes—known in newspapers outside New York. Mr. Dewey always got his man and moreover, he let it be known, he did it without resort to crudities like the third degree. There were other ways—not advertised—of obtaining confessions. Wiretapping was one, or grabbing smaller criminals and holding them in "protective arrest" under extraordinary bail until they spilled about the higher-ups.

Phony subpoenas, searches and seizures without warrant, excessive and unusual bail: these tactics may explain why Dewey does not risk paying the amount of lip service usually bestowed by candidates on "our sacred Constitution." But people knew much more about his results than his methods at that time. Anti-Tammany forces elected him district attorney in 1937; he threw "Lucky" Luciano in jail and tossed Richard Whitney in after him. The GOP ran him for governor in 1938 and Dewey, while not elected, got one of the largest Republican votes ever cast in a New York gubernatorial election. Young David returned to his slingshot and brought down Tammany Goliath Jimmy Hines, along with lesser grafters. Last fall he threw his crusader's halo in the ring.

Until he became a presidential aspirant Dewey had no overt opinions on national issues. He has them now, since any man who pays $3,000 for a speech is surely entitled to the opinions in it. But before this he spoke or wrote nothing that deviated from his intense conviction that crime was deplorable and political corruption a sin. There is nothing on record to indicate that the candidate even wondered about the social roots of the rackets he was "smashing." Perhaps Mr. Dewey would have regarded such curiosity as too political, i.e., divorced from the pure civic virtue untainted by material elements on which his reputation rested. Since he bases so much of his electoral appeal on this virtue, let us see how non-political it is.

TRESPASSING

Last September *Current History* reported that Dewey and his aides were possibly disturbed by the fact that "successful crime prosecution has ceased to be a Dewey monopoly, the federal government—and politics has been suspected—having entered the preserve." Now Roosevelt's administration has entered the "prosecution preserve" most conspicuously in Thurman Arnold's attack on labor unions through the Sherman act and in federal proceedings against Communists as typified by the Browder conviction. Mr. Dewey is not the only person to suspect politics here. What's more important (to him), he regards it as trespassing. So he is going after the labor unions and the Communists himself. Three days after the Browder conviction his office dusted off a three-year-old libel suit brought against the *Daily Worker* editor, Clarence Hathaway, by Mrs. Edith Liggett, widow of an anti-Farmer-Labor editor of Minnesota. A blue-ribben jury, consisting largely of constituents from Dewey's assembly district, was selected to make conviction certain. Dewey's assistant, prosecutor Stichman, engaged in some libel himself, playing up the old "force and violence" gag about Communists. Meanwhile the Department of Justice scooped the young DA with another frameup, that of Ben Gold and other fur union leaders. Again Mr. Dewey countertrespassed. Last week his men marched into a convention of the Building Service Employees Union and disrupted the session by serving "show cause" orders on four union officials. The excuse was that these men were wanted for questioning in connection with the activities of George Scalise, former Building Service president, who had just been arrested for racketeering and extortion. Delegates who had welcomed the Scalise expose were infuriated by this follow-up publicity stunt on Dewey's part. At least one of the officials subpoenaed was noted for his opposition

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to Scalise. The delegates themselves were deliberating ways of guarding their union against racketeers. But Mr. Dewey had to have his headlines. He had to show himself as good a union-buster as Arnold.

YEOMAN OF THE "NEW GUARD"

Dewey backers present him as a "new guard" Republican. The title has been claimed by others. Variations of it were first sprung in about 1930 when Republicans had to find a polite way of saying, "I'm not like Hoover." One of Dewey's rivals, Senator Vandenberg, led the "Young Turks," supposedly representing a form of new-guardism. Kenneth Simpson, New York Republican Committee chairman, heads a "liberal element" more frankly directed against Hoover. In Dewey's case the claim rests upon the assertion of his sponsors. When the daughter of Mark Hanna, the Republican boss of Nassau County (J. Russell Sprague), and men like John Foster Dulles, whose law firm occupies six floors at 48 Wall St., start rooting for a new guard candidate, we may be pardoned for staring. Nor has it strengthened their cause for George van Slyke of the New York *Sun* to write that Mr. Dewey must be a liberal since he is supported by "the leader of the liberal wing of the party," none other than Alf Landon. Disrespect for civil liberties, Red-baiting, and anti-unionism are not new among Republican, or Democratic, Party leaders. Which leaves Mr. Dewey with nothing novel but his eternal youth.

His speeches are older than Hoover's, at least as old as Harding's. Warren G. promised the people a rest from New Freedom. Dewey offers them a haven from New Dealism—that and literally nothing else. One of his advantages over Vandenberg and Taft is that his past record contains not a single positive proposal that might be used to embarrass him now. Even so, he has had one bad scare on the subject of peace. This past January the candidate was hinting that "we must search for the moment when we might, without entanglement, use our good offices to effect a genuine peace." He was thought to be influenced by Henry Stimson's leaning toward intervention. But in Wisconsin and Nebraska he found that a line like "We must stay out of war" got the biggest hand. Mr. Dewey thereupon switched to this line exclusively and Col. Breckinridge Long complained in a letter to the New York *Herald Tribune* that the candidate had been saying one thing in some cities and another in others. Since then Dewey has stuck to comparing America with a porcupine that minds its own business but is ready to defend itself if attacked. Let editors of opposition papers ask all the irritable questions they want about exactly where *does* this man stand on peace. Mr. Dewey will say nothing further about peace than that it's wonderful and you can't trust Democrats to keep it. Occasionally he warns that we in America must be free and strong ourselves in order to avoid the mess in Europe. That, however, is just by way of bestowing another

Charles Martin

"If it wasn't for us guys—where would Dewey be today?"

caress on his goddess Private Enterprise. In fairness to the candidate, it should be said that his party rivals are hardly more specific. In fact, if the Republican Party intends to offer a peace plank this year that will go beyond a platitude about "foreign entanglements," we have yet to be told what it is. Nor is it possible to imagine it. What peace program has the GOP ever offered? What peace program *can* a party representing the highest reaches of finance capital offer the people of America?

OLD HAT

As a campaigner Dewey has some cute tricks. One is the Peter Pan–Pollyanna act: Mr. Roosevelt is a tired old defeatist, who once said, "The economic machine is stalled on dead center." Give Tom Dewey the White House and American faith in individual enterprise will burgeon. Don't ask him exactly how this will come about. All he knows is what he reads in his speeches, and his speeches say that under the Roosevelt administration the country is practically going to hell in an express elevator. In fact you can learn some interesting truths from the candidate's perorations: that unemployment is increasing, the worker is getting kicked around, the farmers are economic stepchildren, and we are in danger of being involved in war. Mr. Dewey will even quote you John L. Lewis on these points. Maybe it isn't fair either to claim that the DA has absolutely no suggestions for improving things. It's only that the suggestions themselves say nothing. Some of them derive from Landon's generalities about protecting industry, putting the bureaucrat in his place, and the glories of mass production. Others are timid variations on the most popular New Deal policies, too vague to be analyzed. Young Tom's trumpeting of ancient Wall Street themes is loudest and most lusty when it comes to taxation and federal spending. Here he really lets himself go and here he reveals the true Dewey conviction. It is—need I tell you?—that starvation is as nothing beside the anguish of a Morgan or Rockefeller with an "uncertain" business investment.

On other issues you can learn more about the candidate from what he does not say. As I have mentioned, it's risky business for the DA to talk about the Bill of Rights. Somebody in the audience might bring up his "singing schools," houses where Dewey is wont to keep witnesses (usually arrested without evidence) until they are persuaded, bribed, or alarmed into "singing" for him. Or a heckler might ask whether it's true, as Governor Lehman claims, that Dewey's friends in the state legislature killed the bills to outlaw wiretapping and unlawful search and seizure. In truth, G-man Dewey's methods are distinguished from G-man Hoover's by little more than unobtrusiveness and—for the present—political discretion. This extremely important fact is in the candidate's record.

He has said nothing that would encourage workers to suppose he favors collective bargaining. This business of quoting John L. Lewis to support his own attacks on Roosevelt is another of the Dewey cute tricks. It's a smart talking point and won't in the least disturb his financial chums, who know as well as the CIO chief that there isn't a crumb of agreement in Dewey's and Lewis' opposition to the administration. The candidate describes Lewis himself as a man who "put up half a million dollars out of union workers' dues to carry on those [New Deal] heresies." Organized labor, I suspect, is not so much interested in "heresies" as in knowing how far Mr. Dewey intends to go in competing with Thurman Arnold. It hardly has to ask him what he thinks of the Wagner act or the Wage-Hour law.

THE FARMERS

An entire Dewey speech is devoted to the farmers. Don't bother to read it. It says that the government won't let the poor farmer call his soul his own, that there are agricultural surpluses, and that industry should be stimulated so the farmer can buy lower-priced goods. It says (echoes of Hawley and Smoot) that agriculture "is entitled to" as much tariff protection as industry. On crop loans, soil conservation, and marketing agreements Mr. Dewey says he wants them—to what extent and through what devices he doesn't indicate. Crop loans, etc., cost money; how does Dewey harmonize this with his passion for less federal spending? The candidate admits with boyish frankness that he "knows no single scheme that will solve the farm problem overnight." But he has faith: "My faith lies in the 130,000,000 free Americans, free to produce, free to live and to go forward again to their own, their natural destiny." What does this lilting poppycock mean? That Dewey has exhausted the Coolidge quackery and has nothing else to give the farmers.

His "new guardism" is not even as daring as Glenn Frank's. The latter's proposed plat-

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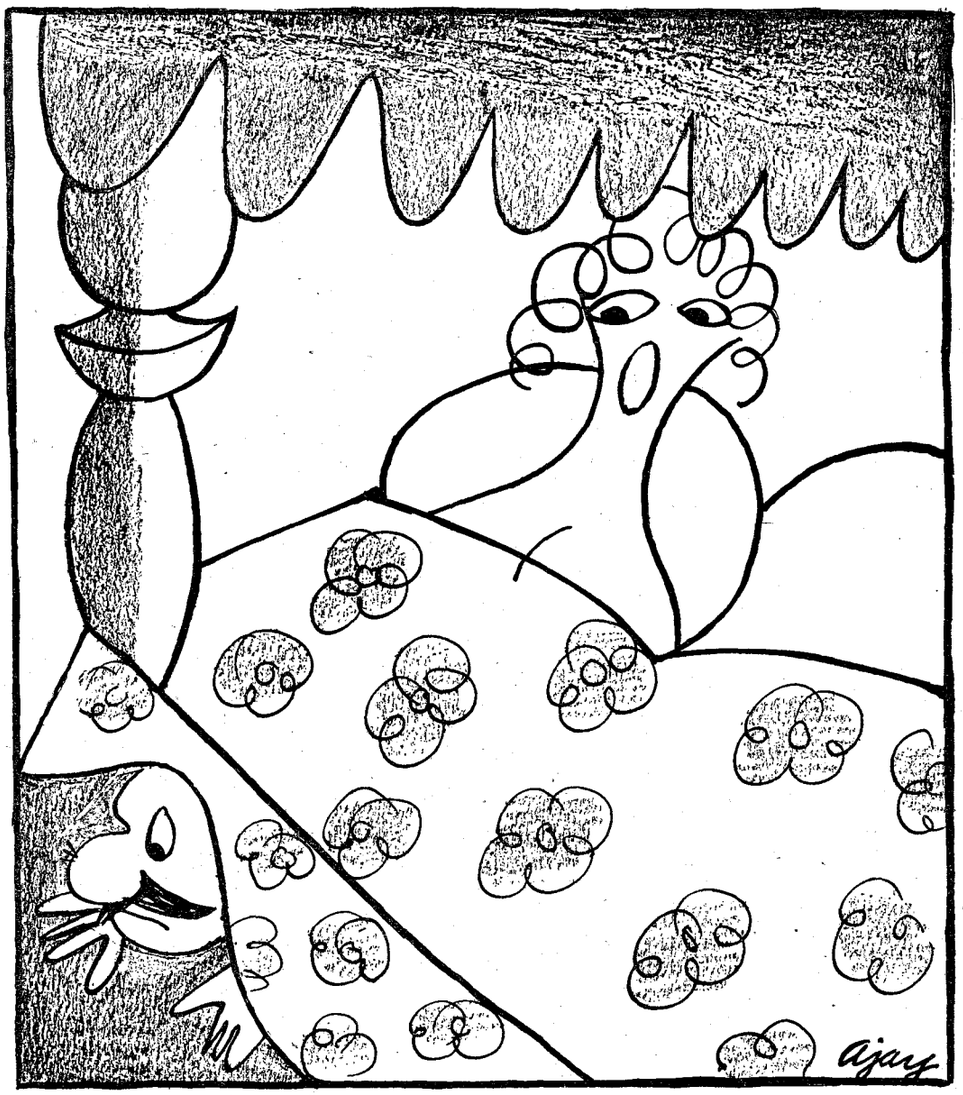
form for the Republican Party at least promised a national health program and extension of social security to farm laborers and domestic workers. But as a demagogue Dewey is slicker than Taft, cagier than Vandenberg. None of them, of course, can rival the performance of Franklin D. Roosevelt, by far the most graceful acrobat in the entire hippodrome of liberal pretenders. Dewey's chief talent lies in his evasiveness. He is particularly good at flashing before his audience a quick dazzling sketch of Tom Dewey in the White House, without ever letting anyone see the details. They can be filled in, however. We know in general who his backers are. Besides Dulles, Ruth Hanna McCormick Sims, and Sprague, they include: Artemus Gates, president of the New York Trust Co., who is related by marriage and financially to the House of Morgan; S. Sloan Colt, president of the Morgan-controlled Bankers Trust Co.; Charles Sisson, assistant attorney general under Hoover; and Roger W. Straus, an executive in the American Smelting & Refining Co. Undoubtedly other segments of Wall Street capital are represented in the collection box. Add to this factor in Dewey's candidacy his civil liberties record, his stuttering on peace, his adoration of Private Enterprise, and the picture becomes plainer. It is grotesque enough without his coltish capering. *This* is what the second largest political party in the country puts forth to charm the voters. This is one of the GOP's offerings in, of all years, 1940!

SOTTO VOCE

What does it matter that Dewey voices no program? Look again at his sponsors, listen to his silences. Evasiveness is more than talent here; it is a necessity. You cannot, you simply cannot say out loud to a people who demand something more than FDR, "Take Hooverism." The GOP elephant never forgets and it learns very little; but it does know now that the days of plainer speaking are over. Less than ten years ago David Reed of Pennsylvania could cry out on the Senate floor, "What we need is a Mussolini in the White House." A few years before that he could speak openly of his own constituents as "dunderheads." You would never have caught Reed or Joe Grundy or Boies Penrose wooing the electorate with Dewey's antics and rhetoric. The main outlines of their appeal were the same; it might be epitomized in the chamber of commerce slogan, "What's good for business is good for you." But they were franker in emphasizing the word business, less cautious about letting people know it meant the very biggest business. The idea then was that the workingman would be glad to help build industry's house of gold so long as he was permitted to come around to the kitchen and fill his dinner pail. Now, with nothing to put in the pail, Dewey and his friends proffer an ersatz of faith, youth, and the good old days. They still want a Mussolini in the White House. But it isn't possible to say so, and anyway they will have something not so different if voters can be persuaded that it isn't the same thing at all.



"Oh, come on to bed, Archibald, and stop looking for the Fifth Column." Ajay

Republican voters haven't had a chance to see Dewey this way. His demagogy has the aid of a vigorous platform personality. He is young enough, and sufficiently theatrical, to lure people who are sick to death of the likes of sourpuss Hoover. His blitzkrieg attacks on the Roosevelt administration undoubtedly bring votes from people who haven't found an alternative to Dum and Dee. These qualities, unfortunately for Dewey, don't make him any more endearing to other Republican leaders. An acquaintance of his once made a remark about him that has been widely printed but deserves more circulation among the electorate: "It's almost impossible to dislike Tom Dewey until you know him well." Young Republicans, as much as their elders, detest his arrogance and bad temper, his prima donna conceit. Ladies who yearn over his handsome young face in the rotogravure do not know that Dewey once had a press photographer fired for taking a picture of him that hadn't been carefully posed first. Newspapermen resent his cockiness and the censorship he imposes on his office, by which no one but Mr. Dewey talks to the press and that when he pleases. He is humorless, dictatorial, and ungrateful.

These things, as well as their own dislike of Dewey, may make GOP strategists dubious of him as a candidate. After all, there's more to a national campaign than one-night appearances on a platform; closeups are demanded. Besides, some Republicans regard young Tom as unsafe, not because of his political views (which are as sound as Andrew Mellon's), but his immaturity in national politics. On the whole they would prefer Vandenberg or Taft, though of course if Dewey is chosen they will take him—and like him. What they do get may depend on the will of Joe Pew, multimillionaire oil man of Pennsylvania, who controls the state's delegates to the nominating convention and will be a central figure in any backroom conference. A number of dark horses have been suggested as likely winners. However, Vandenberg and Taft, in that order, are still Dewey's nearest contenders. In a subsequent article I shall discuss these two aspirants, the place each occupies in Republican politics, and what his election would mean to America.

BARBARA GILES.

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But a Million Didn't Vote

What happened in the California primary. More than 50 percent failed to cast their ballot. Al Richmond tells why.

San Francisco.

THE California presidential primary election has been headlined in the nation's press as a landslide for Roosevelt. It was that. Political commentators went further; they interpreted the results to mean the President can have the Democratic nomination "on a silver platter—if he wants it" (the latter phrase is gratuitous delicacy). Generally, the close to three-to-one edge the Roosevelt ticket had over three rival slates was judged the biggest feather yet in the cap of the "draft Roosevelt" movement.

THE VOTE

The vote, in round numbers, was: Olson-Roosevelt ticket 750,000, Garner ticket 125,000, Ham and Eggs ninety thousand, Patterson anti-war slate fifty thousand. Roosevelt leaders were jubilant. Governor Olson, distressed by a recall movement, harassed by a contemptuous "right" opposition, and bitterly despised by the left support he had betrayed, advised his critics they "should now be silent. . . . And with that silence," he added, "they should also bow to the will of the majority . . . and support their party leaders. . . ." Garnerites were jubilant, too. William R. Wallace, Jr., Garner boss in San Francisco, commented, "The vote for Franklin Delano Roosevelt testifies to a faith in a united continuation of real Democratic Party principles." Ham and Eggs leader Willis Allen shrugged, congratulated the President "on this great demonstration of his personal popularity in California. . . . The Ham and Eggers' only objective was to write a money reform plank into the platform," he added.

Lieut. Gov. Ellis E. Patterson, leader of the progressive peace slate, struck the only original note:

> Despite our defeat we want to keep alive the issues we ran on. Foremost of those issues was our insistence that we keep out of war. I attribute the great success of the Roosevelt slate to the glamorous name of Roosevelt. Few people realize how he has turned against some of the fundamental elements of the New Deal, but in time they will learn.

The more than a million registered Democrats who did not vote, despite the four-way contest which had been expected to draw a sizable majority to the polls, were not quoted at all. Labor's Non-Partisan League, which dubbed the elections "a problem in confusion," presumed to speak for the silent vote, saying: "The light vote indicated a confusion and mental doubt which caused many, particularly in labor, to refrain from voting at all."

Were one to be content with surface judgment, oblivious of the fact that political realignments in America are in a state of transition, the most obvious implications noted by political commentators would tell the story. But below the surface tide there was an undertow, weak as yet but potentially a decisive factor in shaping America's future. Progressive supporters of the Patterson anti-war slate, disappointed at their small vote, regarded it as the price of pioneering.

Considering that the political current which the Patterson slate represented (the progressive movement toward a peace party) was making its first open challenge against the Roosevelt camp under the most disadvantageous circumstances, the fifty thousand votes it received are the conscious nucleus for the new movement, rather than a gauge of its mass potential. The contest was a primary, supposedly designed to express a preference for presidential nominees. The Patterson slate, having no nominee to offer, was compelled to make its appeal without any mass leader to dramatize it. From the viewpoint of practical politics this was a great handicap and undoubtedly many of the million voters who could not be drawn to the polls by the "glamorous Roosevelt name" would have voted had the Patterson platform also been represented by an alternate candidate.

LATE ENTRY

Further, the progressive slate entered the contest very late and not until three weeks before the election did it begin to overcome its initial vacillations on program and on bold opposition to the Roosevelt pro-war policy. Even then, despite the decisions made at the Fresno conference (reported in the April 30 issue of NEW MASSES) to challenge Roosevelt and support the Patterson slate, some of the leaders continued to follow a policy of compromise.

A typical incident occurred in a large CIO local in San Francisco. Leaders of the union had attended the Fresno conference and concurred in its decisions. Upon their return to San Francisco, they decided to report on the conference to the local membership. But they agreed to limit it to an "informative report," without asking for an endorsement of the conference program or the Patterson ticket, fearing that they would suffer a defeat if they attempted to buck the Roosevelt sentiment. One of the leaders reported and sat down. However, a rank and file member arose and moved that the union endorse the Patterson ticket. After thorough discussion, the motion was carried by an overwhelming vote.

The policy of compromise, illustrated by the leaders in this instance, was very costly, for the very nature of the campaign required a bold strategy. Some elements are now paraphrasing that ancient cry, "They should not have resorted to arms!" to justify their own vacillation and to prove that it was unwise to challenge Roosevelt. However, in so far as a check can be made, this does not represent any substantial opinion in the progressive camp. Another factor hampering the progressives was lack of organization and money, both of which militated against the development of a mass campaign.

FUTURE TACTICS

Attention will now be centered on the coming political wars in the August primaries and the November elections. Progressive strategy, profiting from the experiences of the primaries, will concentrate on two immediate objectives: (1) reestablishment of unity with the Ham and Eggs movement; (2) involvement of larger sections of the AFL in the peace movement. These are tactical questions. The broader political problems are: how to channelize existing anti-war sentiment; how to decrease the "glamour" of the Roosevelt name in some proportion to the shift in the policies for which it stands.

A start, at any rate, has been made in this direction and that is most important. The break with Roosevelt has been made; a skeleton organization has been established comprising a coalition much stronger than was indicated by the primary vote. The primary was a primary in the literal sense of the word; the finals are yet to come.

AL RICHMOND.

M-Day in General Motors

GENERAL MOTORS has posted bulletins in its East Bay (California) plants warning workers that they are subject to discharge for advocating "subversive doctrines." When a grievance committee in one of the plants protested to Superintendent Brown that the ruling looked like part of a plan to take them into war, Brown retorted, "You're God damned right it is," and added, "We're going into this war on the side of England." Vern Smith of the *People's World,* who uncovered the story for his paper, reports that the superintendent also told the workers, "The best thing you can do is to keep your God damned mouths shut." The committee then went to F. Fitzpatrick, general manager of all East Bay Chevrolet plants, who told them: "The plant is company property, and when you're on it you do and you talk as we say, or we'll run your——out of here. This plant for the company is just like your home for you. If anybody says anything you don't like, you kick his——through the door."

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Behind the Christian Front Trial

"The case is a hot potato," James Morison says. Where is the chief culprit? Ask Mr. Jackson why Father Coughlin isn't called.

WHEN the Christian Front trial began last month in that ancient federal courthouse of marble and red plush corridors in the heart of Brooklyn, seventeen defendants occupied the space within the rail. Seventeen sat before Judge Marcus B. Campbell, as friends and relatives filled the corridors, as attorneys—an entire corps—gathered about the tables. At the very start of proceedings there were accusations that some kind of religious chicanery was about to be used in selecting the jury. Father Coughlin's *Social Justice* was sold in the courthouse corridors. Young James F. Cassidy, leader of the Christian Front and one of the defendants, attempted to act out his role of fascist fuehrer, rallying his forces, dictating at times to a secretary, talking to his cronies, maintaining a contemptuous stiff upper lip.

The case is a hot potato. Everyone knows that. The press has played it down. No sob sisters have interviewed "the lads," as the defendants are called. The seventeen were, at the beginning, heroes in a great campaign run by Coughlinites; they had received for their defense the pennies and dollars of the poor. Furthermore they were up for nothing less than treason—conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States by force and violence, not to mention theft of government properties. Yet even the suicide of Claus Gunther Ernecke, machine-gunner and Nazi, has done little to rouse the public interest. What the papers said in January, when the men were arrested by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI agents—that the government's charges seemed "fantastic," "ridiculous," the boys "frightened," or "overcome with awe"—has been so impressed upon the public mind that few are disturbed by the trial's extraordinary revelations.

Evidence thus far introduced, coupled with statements made by the defendants themselves, proves that the men are guilty. Even the fact that red-faced, forgetful Dennis A. Healey, informer and voluntary FBI agent, created a woefully weak impression during his long tenure of the witness chair does not controvert facts about a plot, facts which extend beyond the courtroom into high places.

REAL CULPRIT ABSENT

Yet the trial has been dull, lacking news value. The reason? The real culprit is not in the court, nor has he even been arrested, nor has an attempt been made to involve him in these charges of a conspiracy to set up a fascist dictatorship in the United States. Father Coughlin is not in the prisoner's dock.

Of course Father Coughlin is in the courtroom in spirit. If you miss the little girl who cries out: "The same gang that crucified Christ are at it again, trying to convict these seventeen innocent Christian boys," or if you fail to notice the sellers of *Social Justice,* or if you do not hear testimony which directly links the Royal Oak priest to these conspirators, you cannot fail to notice the typical Coughlinite quality of the proceedings. Defense attorneys, headed by former magistrate Leo Healey and assisted by noted Martin Conboy, pound away at witnesses in typical fascist style, seeking to influence the jury by character assassination, by political innuendo, by the convenient Reichstag fire trick of turning the whole plot inside out and accusing the Communists. Christian Fronter Cassidy cried out in court: "Long live Christ! Down with Communism!" Nazi Macklin Boettger told reporters that "the boys" were defending "representative government against Communists." It was the Coughlin technique borrowed from Goebbels.

Yet because the chief plotter is free, the trial seems to drift into unreality. That is, until you dig beneath the monotonous statements of FBI agents reporting on the use of cinema and dictaphone to trap the accused, or the soft-spoken assistant attorney general's dull presentations, or the sharp, nasty quality of lawyer Healey's cross-examination.

The records of this case contain proof of a nationwide plot to build storm troop organizations of picked rioters, strikebreakers, bombers, and assassins. Accused of involvement in this plot were, in addition to Coughlin, at least one congressman, Representative Thorkelson of Montana, with the probability that army officers and certainly officers of the National Guard are implicated.

Testimony thus far shows that James F. Cassidy was selected as leader of the Christian Front about one year ago, succeeding one Marcel Honore, whose activities were not considered vigorous enough. Cassidy lives in Brooklyn, was a clerk in Consolidated Edison, and has studied law. He is alert, personable, a fiery speaker, trained in the professional fascist school from which such worthies as Joseph E. McWilliams, head of the Christian Mobilizers, came.

Cassidy's sway in the Front extended from Philadelphia to Boston. Other leaders must have been selected for other sections of the country. Their master unquestionably was none other than Father Coughlin himself. Their national organ was Father Coughlin's *Social Justice.* Coughlin spoke by radio in their behalf and mentioned Cassidy by name during mass meetings in Philadelphia and Boston.

As early as 1938, Coughlin called for platoons to defend his kind of Americanism. In *Social Justice,* issue of Aug. 14, 1939, he stated he favored the aims of the Christian Front, but he carefully disclaimed any connection with the organization, quite as if he knew in advance that its activities would be illegal. Further to break the chain between the radio priest and the bombs, rifles, ammunition, and other death-dealing devices found in the defendants' possession, the Christian Front was organizationally separated from the "sporting and athletic" groups which accumulated arms and ammunition. These select nuclei were ruled by the Action Committee. To it were said to belong all of the present defendants, some of whom are unquestionably Nazis, at least one of whom had some connection with William Dudley Pelley's Silver Shirts.

CASSIDY AND BISHOP

If you visit the courtroom you may identify Cassidy by his alert and obvious leadership of one section of the defendants. The other personality present is the "mysterious" William Gerald Bishop, variously known as the Czech Hrnsek, William Arnecke, Major Wilhelm Bischoff of the German Army; former bartender, steward, head of that group within the Action Committee that wished to provoke riots by means of bombing the *Daily Worker,* the Cameo Theater, and other offices.

Stoolpigeon Healey and the Department of Justice prosecutors have tended to separate the Coughlinites from the Nazis among the prisoners. They have tended to show that the Coughlinites were arming for defense against a mythical "Red revolution." Bishop and the Nazis scoffed; as realists they knew that the Communists are opposed to the use of force and violence. Therefore, Bishop "misled" the "misguided" Couglinites by urging them to provoke Communist disorders by bombings and shootings.

This is the story. How well does it hold up? By collating testimony at the trial, it is possible to show that there was no difference between the Coughlin group and the Nazis in either methods or ideas. Both worked together to establish a national organization according to the plan announced by Father Coughlin last summer, an organization of five million unsuspecting Americans, built around a central corps of trained terrorists, aided by men in high position in the army, police, National Guard, abetted by the most reactionary capitalists in America, probably supported by such stanch allies of Father Coughlin as Henry Ford and other industrialists.

First let us examine the dossier on the Nazis. William Gerald Bishop entered the Christian Front as part of that alliance of fascist forces which grew out of meetings held in New York and elsewhere during the win-

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ter of 1938-39, at some of which Rep. Martin Dies spoke. He favored Maj. Gen. William Van Horn Moseley as dictator; he was linked to the Protestant, anti-Catholic fascists of the South and West. He won the confidence of Capt. John T. Prout, Jr., National Guard officer, who supplied "the boys" with ammunition, according to Healey and others. Bishop, who impressed Prout with his military knowledge, has been accused of being a paid German spy. He spoke of 175 New York City policemen as Frontists. He urged bombthrowing, shooting of congressmen, drew sketches of bombs for another defendant.

Macklin Boettger, American-born Nazi, handled explosives, according to his own statement. Cordite and ammunition were found in his home, where meetings were frequently held. He took part in rifle practice in the Catskills and saw bombs made by the gang. He lived with Claus Gunther Ernecke, who committed suicide during the trial. A National Guardsman, Ernecke tried to recruit dissatisfied guard members. He is said to have had two light machine guns in his possession, and served as a contact of stoolpigeon Dennis Healey.

Cordite was also found in the home of Nazi John Albert Viebrock, who keeps company with Cassidy's sister, and who provides the direct link between Cassidy and the Nazis. He confessed to having manufactured nine bombs, spoke publicly on the use of rifles. A fifth Nazi is Michael Vill, born in Germany, said to have been with Hitler at the time of the beer cellar putsch. He practiced handling rifles and in general worked along with the others.

Cassidy had imagination. Bishop was the practical man. Cassidy used Coughlin's phrase about "the Franco way" of combating "Communism." He made notes on organizing the sale of *Social Justice* and protecting sellers. He received reports from Bishop, who wrote from West Virginia about rifle practice there, where eight hundred men were present "at the exercises." Notes found in Cassidy's home in his handwriting mentioned "a ring of steel about the city," "hold all public buildings, churches, etc.," "demand surrender of all radical officers," and so on. These notes were written on the back of a letter which began "Reverend and Dear Sir," explaining to recipients that it was intended to acquaint them with the purposes of the Christian Front. "Our program is not one of aggression but of defense," the letter said, in an appeal for the help of the clergy. It added that "the most potent weapon" was the sale of Father Coughlin's *Social Justice*. "Though unassociated with the militant editor, the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, we pledge ourselves to defend him and all other true soldiers of Christ with the last drop of our blood," the communication closed.

Previous to the admission of this evidence, Nazi Viebrock had stated that John F. Cassidy was "the recognized head of the Christian Front, recognized by Rev. Charles E. Coughlin." Let us now see what role Cassidy's bright young men played in the conspiracy.

Andrew Buckley, associated with the Nazis in the National Guard, was the contact between Bishop and Captain Prout. According to testimony, he acted as a go-between in handling ammunition, which was delivered to Bishop. William Henry Bushness, Frontist, eighteen years old, helped make bombs. He also drew floor plans of the *Daily Worker*, with a view to bombing the building in which that newspaper is published. Young John F. Cook, Frontist, made plans of armories, which were to be used as centers after the armed putsch.

Rifles and ammunition were discovered in the home of John A. Graf, Frontist. Leroy Keegan, Frontist, is Cook's uncle, who recruited the boy. Captain Prout is an acknowledged Frontist. He admitted having given Bishop ammunition and has been accused of being one of the National Guard corps of officers who would turn over control of the city to the Frontists during an emergency. Edward Walsh, Frontist, National Guardsman, worked with Bishop.

This is the record. It is an alarming one, especially alarming because of the attitude of J. Edgar Hoover, who, since the trial began, has worked along the well defined lines of anti-Communist Red-baiting, quite in the same fashion as Cassidy, Bishop & Co., and their sponsors, Coughlin, Pelley, Thorkelson, Dies, Moseley. Mr. Hoover's agents have harassed Communists, illegally arrested progressives, worked with Thurman Arnold in his anti-union drive.

THE REAL CASE

If this is true, it may well be asked, why do Mr. Hoover's agents stand up in court day after day and expose the Christian Front? One explanation is contained in the fact that not till the European war began did the Roosevelt administration take action against the Frontists; obviously, this fits in with the Roosevelt pro-Allied policy since the Christian Front, like its leader, Father Coughlin, is pro-Hitler. Another motive is that the prosecution of the Christian Front can be used to justify a drive against the Communists and other progressives. The fact that the administration has refused to bring to trial Father Coughlin and other higher-ups like Brigadier General Anderson and Lieutenant Colonel Meany of the National Guard shows that its efforts against the fascist plotters of violence are largely window dressing; the real attack is against the left, against the Communists, the trade unions, the supporters of loyalist Spain—against the civil liberties of the people.

Today American democracy is threatened not alone by the Coughlins and Moseleys and their Christian Front agents. The night-club Himmler, J. Edgar Hoover, is no less a menace. And the pro-war policies of the Roosevelt administration are preparing—unless halted in time—such a blackout of civil liberties as will make all the plottings of the Christian Front seem like child's play.

JAMES MORISON.

Information, Please

ANTICIPATING the beginning of congressional hearings on the American Youth Act, General Motors last week entertained several hundred students from the technical universities. Alfred Sloan, Jr. ($164,450 in 1938), was there, with William Knudsen ($303,400) and Charles Kettering (only $192,923). So were the presidents of Dartmouth College and MIT, and fun-loving Gen. Hugh Johnson. Million-dollar speeches were served with dinner, after which the moguls answered twenty-five questions, sifted from several hundred which the students had been invited to submit. These questions are a powerful index of the ferment in the student mind today. At least seven were critical of an educational system which had fitted them for jobs they could not find. Nine others challenged business leaders to explain why the living standards of two-thirds of the people were not being raised, why machines were throwing men out of work, and what the profit system was going to do about it. The answers were in the best tradition of mystification: evasive, Pollyanna stuff. Dr. Kettering, GM vice president, gave the worst performance. In reply to one query on how students could plan for marriage in view of the long training periods modern industry demands, Kettering offered this profound advice: "I got married, and let my wife do the planning."

As though someone from above had handed down the order that Big Business go after the youth, the University of Rochester also offered a clinic on "New Frontiers in American life." This gathering included the usual dividend-studded galaxy: Cole Coolidge of du Pont, Owen D. Young of General Electric, several railroad potentates, David Sarnoff of RCA, and even David Selznick of the flickers. Here, too, there was much salivation about the great frontiers which only the profit motive can unlock for the American people, but there was also considerable alarm over the growing lack of young people's faith in business. Mr. Langbourne Williams of the Freeport Sulphur Co. insisted that "professors must teach their students something about the profit system . . . something of how it works instead of starting them out in a world to fit them into something they have been led to believe is rotten and unworkable." Mr. Selznick admitted that Hollywood was "seemingly shut, that thousands were waiting for employment, that it was difficult so much as to get an interview." But he rallied with the cheering news that young people with "talent, irrepressible desire, perseverance, and plain guts will somehow break through."

The truth is that Big Business is worried about the young generation. Youth, more deeply than other elements in American life, is questioning the barbarian hocus-pocus of private enterprise. These two forums at Rochester and the World's Fair are really a reply to the emergent alliance of youth with labor, symbolized in John L. Lewis' great speech to the American Youth Congress last February.

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Which Way Will Franco Jump?

Cesar Falcon, a leading loyalist publicist, tells the inside story of 1940 Spain. Will London win Madrid? Will the revolution begin anew?

WILL Spain enter the war? What is the policy of the Franco regime toward the two contending imperialist groups? These are questions that many people are asking. As one who personally participated in the great struggle to save Spanish democracy and who continues to work for a free Spain, I too have sought the answers. I offer them for what they are worth.

The same contradictions which characterize Franco's domestic policies operate in the sphere of international relations. Spanish newspapers, especially the most representative of the Falangist periodicals, show a decided and insistent partiality for Germany, and most of them unconditional support for Italy. But does this noisy and irresponsible chatter represent in fact the most decisive force in the Franco regime? Who does really command in Spain? The generalissimo remains, of course, a symbolic figure, as he was during the war. The fact that groups and castes utilize him and make of him a sort of fetish does not mean that he exercises over the country and the party a control comparable to that which Hitler and Mussolini wield in their countries and parties. For one thing, both Hitler and Mussolini are men of their own parties and came to the top as party leaders. Franco, on the other hand, is a fortuitous leader, imposed by foreign influence and acknowledged as a compromise to placate the various factions.

On the surface the Falangists predominate. It is they who organize the parades, unfurl the flags, do the shouting, write the propaganda and make up the terror squads. But the political helm is not in their hands. When I say Falangists I mean exclusively the followers of Jose Antonio (Primo de Rivera's son) and the youth who surround them. Their program is the "empire" and the "fascist revolution." Inside the Falange and holding the most prominent positions there are also men like Serrano Suner and Ibanez Martin, servants of feudal reaction and themselves instrumental in the repression of fascist "extremism" and demagogy.

FALANGISTS VS. TRADITIONALISTS

In spite of the victory in the war against the republic, or rather because of it, an unremitting struggle goes on between the Falangists, inspired and controlled by their foreign instructors, and the traditional reactionaries, characterized (though they are monarchists for the most part) by their interests and aspirations. To this latter faction Franco belongs from of old. Up to now, appearances notwithstanding, the Falangists have lost all the important battles. Their first defeat was the arrest of Hedilla, general secretary of the party, in the early months of the European war. He was removed by the reactionary elements, including those inside the party, who backed Franco. The second defeat, soon after the war, was the sacrifice of another general secretary, Fernandez Cuesta, also an old-guard Falangist and leader of the "fascist revolution." Unlike Hedilla, Cuesta did not land in jail; but he had to give up the party secretaryship and the Ministry of Agriculture, being kicked out of the latter post by the big landowners who feared his so-called "revolution."

The last defeat came only a few weeks ago. The third party secretary, Gen. Munoz Grande, although he was Franco's own choice, appeared to take too seriously Jose Antonio's "doctrine": the result was that he was summarily dismissed. This time the house cleaning was more thorough: aside from other retirements of lesser importance, Fernandez Cuesta, who, though ambassador to Brazil, remained at home busily maneuvering with party extremists, was ordered to leave at once for South America. He is already on the high seas, better off than in jail.

What are the political consequences of such incidents? The results are visible on the inside. Spanish reaction—the ensemble of big landowners, aristocrats, men of big business, army chiefs, and the clergy—impose their program: 2 pesetas of salary for a day's work (from daybreak to nightfall) for the rural worker; wages of between 4 and 8 pesetas for a ten-hour day in the factories; the complete suppression of all forms of freedom; religious intolerance and implacable terror by the Guardia Civil. All this must be understood, of course, in the Spanish way, different from any other regime of oppression. It means, for instance, that any man or woman may be arrested for not going to mass, for not confessing and communicating regularly; that a schoolmaster may be sentenced to capital punishment for not teaching the catechism. It means also that a hungry peasant may be shot and killed for gathering a few acorns, and that no employee, worker, small merchant, or destitute person has any rights whatever before the authority of a simple gendarme. Thus the landlords, the clergy, and the army officers have the lives and property of the citizens at their mercy. It is a throwback to the days of Philip II; only today the picture is darker because of the vengeful hatreds induced by the Spanish war.

Wood sculpture by Seymour A. Lipton

Soldier

FEUDAL-CAPITALIST CONTROL

This ruthless program conflicts in a sense with the demagogy of a number of Falangists of middle class or proletarian stock, whose family interests obviously do not coincide with those of the feudal caste. A similar process developed within German and Italian fascism. But Spanish reaction possesses a political experience, a tradition of power, and a force as a class unknown to the reactionary elements who opposed fascist extremism in Italy and Germany. It has ruled Spain almost uninterruptedly for five centuries, owns a third of the nation's territory, controls the Bank of Spain, has defeated three great revolutions, was able to check for 150 years the liberal movement—and is today undoubtedly the oldest ruling class in Europe. Against its immense economic power, its deep social roots, its enormous military and religious tentacles, what can a few restless youths do, especially since their political activity has been hitherto the instrument of the very same reactionary forces? It is not remarkable therefore that, in spite of foreign influences, feudal-capitalist reaction has won the major battles and keeps Franco under its thumb.

Franco's position in the imperialist war must be examined in the light of the real domestic situation in Spain. The spreading of the conflict will undoubtedly provoke tremendous internal repercussions. A strong faction in the Falange (that of the extremists as opposed to the reactionaries) supports with the exaggerated fervor of Spanish sectarianism the policies of Germany, and particularly those of Italy. The dominant reactionaries, on the other hand, hide their inclinations under the cautious mantle of neutrality. *ABC,* for instance, their most outstanding newspaper, invariably echoes the organized propaganda in favor of Germany, but insists on pointing out the neutrality of Spain. Its old writers, Germanophiles during the World War, incessantly repeat that Spanish neutrality is inviolable. Franco's own position is daily voiced through the articles of Manuel Aznar, a sort

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of official mouthpiece of the regime. He advocates unalterable neutrality.

All this is a strategic facade. Let us look closely at this Spanish neutrality. It is true that most of the press, controlled and written by the Falangists, rants against the "demoplutocratic" powers. But I have just seen the British Gibraltar fleet patrolling Spanish territorial waters in Algeciras and in Ceuta. I saw also that the Tarifa fortifications, built by the Germans during the Spanish war in order to silence Gibraltar, have been dismantled. British destroyers and French submarines police the waters of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands day and night. There is a visible line of Allied naval forces across the Mediterranean path between Italy and Spain. Today, as during the World War, with Franco's tacit consent England and France are taking advantage of the geographic position of Spain.

Of course there is a *quid pro quo* in these concessions. Recently Franco received a loan of £2,000,000 from Great Britain; the oranges from Valencia are being sold again in France, and the recent commercial pacts with the Allied powers, apart from the agreements for the establishment of air lines, have been concluded on such terms as could not have been predicted a year ago. The insolent outbursts of Senor Lequerica in Paris have come to an end. Far from declining in importance, the embassy in London (in charge of the duke of Alba) has assumed added significance with the appointment of a former monarchist diplomat, Lopez-Doriga, as ambassador to Turkey, where he is cooperating with the Allies.

Will Spanish reaction succeed in aligning Franco with the Allies? That seems most probable. From Charles V to Trafalgar the Spanish empire waged a life-and-death struggle against the British empire. But since 1808, when old reactionary Spain had to face the liberal democratic movement stemming from France, the reactionary ruling castes of England and Spain have formed close ties. Britain successfully helped Spanish reaction in its struggle against Napoleon; just as a century

"You Have Abandoned the Spanish Refugees . . ."

An open letter from Constancia de la Mora to Jay Allen

DEAR JAY ALLEN:—Because I know the excellent work you did in America during the two and a half years of war in Spain and even afterward, because I witnessed your clear understanding of the treason that handed over Madrid and its heroic population to Franco, I cannot now comprehend what has come over you.

A Pan-American Conference to help Spanish refugees is held in Mexico City with delegates from Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, Puerto Rico, and the United States. At this conference important and constructive resolutions are passed. The voting is unanimous with the exception of three of the seven United States delegates. But when the resolutions reached New York and were presented to the Executive Board of the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, to be put into effect at once, you are among those who refuse to vote their approval of these measures giving immediate and practical aid to the Spanish refugees. This caused a split in the work of relief for the refugees at the moment of their greatest crisis.

A few days after the conference in Mexico City ended, information was received from the International Coordinating Committee in Paris in the form of a copy of an order of General Menard. This was not from "a French general, one General Menard" as you put it, but from *the* General Menard, chief of the inspection of concentration camps for Spanish Refugees. This order was to the effect that before March 15 tens of thousands of Spanish refugees would be forced to return to Spain. Four days later representatives of the French government in the United States denied the authenticity of the order. Without further investigation you, a newspaperman always keen to prove your assertions with facts, accepted this "official" denial. You thereby condemned wholesale those whose courageous protests have done more than anything else to prevent the refugees from being shipped back to a certain death in fascist Spain.

I have seen and read extracts from over fifty letters written from different camps in France by Spanish women like myself—workers, schoolteachers, mothers, widows of soldiers and officers. They write in tragic tones of desperation, for each one has been advised that if they did not find work before March 15 they would be sent back to Spain. Do you know that in Douarnenez (Finistere), Plouneze (Cote du Nord), and other camps forced repatriation actually began as early as March 2? But this does not end the tale of cruelty visited upon my compatriots. Besides the Menard order, I have in my possession a copy of a circular order dated Feb. 13, 1940, and issued by the Departmental prefects to the mayors of towns and villages where there are Spanish refugees. This order states that women, children, orphans, and invalids who lack natural means of support will be forced to return to Spain. The only exceptions are those who can find work before March 15. But do you know that these letters I mentioned above repeat again and again that none is allowed to leave the camps in search of work?

Another exception is made in this order for those who can prove by documents that they will suffer reprisals in Spain. Here again, these letters tell of the utter impossibility to present documents which, if they ever existed, were destroyed by every Spaniard as he crossed the border into France. And although the order establishes that those women whose husbands are working in France in factories, agriculture, or labor battalions have a right to remain, hundreds and thousands of them are also forced back. And finally, those in camps at present who *have* been reclaimed cannot rejoin their employed husbands before March 15 when the camps were closing because they lacked the train fare. Ironically enough, the order from the prefect specifies that reclaimed dependents would be transported free to join their source of support. These women will also be sent back to Spain.

The International Coordinating Committee in Paris consists of distinguished French men and women who carry on with unequaled courage the work of helping the Spanish refugees in the midst of the greatest difficulties and duress. These French men and women are not afraid to send us all the information they receive and copies of the letters that constantly reach their office from the camps, so that we may use this to continue our work effectively. Is it too much to expect that those in other countries who call themselves friends of the Spanish republic and who maintain that their only aim is to help the Spanish refugees, should have at least the same amount of public courage? I feel that you and others have thus abandoned the Spanish refugees in this their hour of greatest need. You still live in a beautiful and peaceful country ruled by democracy, where according to your Bill of Rights every man has the right to express his opinions and state the facts which are truthful, whatever interests they may harm. If those French men and women who are so much nearer the actual scene than you risk everything to make the truth about the Spanish refugees known to the world, we have the right to expect the same from our friends in more distant countries.

Otherwise we will be forced to believe that in the present era of competitive journalism it has become impossible to make a comfortable living and still have the courage to tell the truth.

CONSTANCIA DE LA MORA.
Veracruz, Mexico.

This letter was released to the press April 9. It has not yet been printed elsewhere.—Eds.

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later the British ruling class helped reaction in the war from 1936 to 1939. Franco, or rather the reactionaries who invented him, would never have been able to win, if it had not been for the support that Baldwin and Chamberlain extended to them.

There are, in addition, deeper considerations. Spain holds the most important strategic positions for the defense of the British empire. Who could offer better guarantees of loyalty to British imperialism than its age-old ally, Spanish reaction? It is the reactionary classes, who, to use Primo de Rivera's words, "always considered Gibraltar as British," who, to show their allegiance to an ally, gave Spain an English, though hemophilic, queen. So that the pact between the two ruling classes also ensures the security of British imperialism, and reciprocally, the security of Spanish reaction. The feudal castes in Spain appreciate keenly that the strategic importance of the Iberian peninsula constitutes one of their best means of defense against revolution. The chief mistake of republican diplomacy, in fact, was its failure to launch from the outset an open struggle against British imperialism. There is only one force that can restore the integrity of Spanish territory, that can reclaim Gibraltar, can uproot the influence of British imperialism in Spain—that is, the Spanish people themselves.

FRENCH IMPERIALISM

The historic enemy of Spanish reaction, against which it fought victoriously for 150 years inside Spain, has been the French Revolution. This alone would suffice to bring fascist Spain in conflict with France in the present war were it not for the fact that French imperialism is today the deadliest enemy of the French Revolution and all its achievements. In this regard Franco and his impresarios cannot help but feel the most fervent sympathy for the reactionary policies of the Reynaud-Daladier government.

The imperialism of Spanish reaction is what Lenin called "a tattered imperialism," subaltern, confined to Spain itself and to the oppression of the peninsular nations—Catalans, Basques, Galicians—and to the share of Morocco received as a dole from England and France. Despite the intemperate chatter of the Falangists, Spanish reaction does not aspire to much more, particularly now that it has been impoverished by the war and is occupied with the implacable struggle against the Spanish people. This situation tends to reduce to a minimum conflict with British imperialism.

Other considerations of a military character determine Franco's attitude. Since Spain is surrounded by the land, sea, and air forces of France, England, and fascist Portugal, England's lackey, in any case of open belligerence against the Allies, Franco would be smashed in a few days and no other power would be of any help to him. On the other hand, it is far easier for Franco to repudiate at the crucial moment whatever pacts or secret alliances he may have signed with Germany and Italy during or after the Spanish war, since neither Germany nor Italy could seriously attack Spain before overcoming France and England.

Does all this mean that at the decisive moment Spanish reaction, the truly dominant force in Spain, will enter the war on the side of Franco-British imperialism? By no means. Spain is devastated, hungry, bled white. She lacks economic, military, and political capacity to undertake a war. She would have to be supplied with arms, foodstuffs, money, technicians, etc., by her allies.

THE PEOPLE

But the most important factor of all is the attitude of the people. The slightest war gesture on the part of Franco would cause an uprising of the masses. Millions of peasants, workers, and middle class people, at present subdued by terror, would profit by the first opportunity to convert the war into armed rebellion against the regime. Two deep feelings would move the immense majority of the Spanish people: aversion for war and hatred of Franco-British imperialism. It is very probable that in such a case civil war would start even before the entry of Spanish troops on the international battlefield. The Spanish reactionaries are too shrewd not to understand that such an adventure would bring them to inevitable catastrophe.

Great Britain and France are interested in preventing Spain's entry into the war on the German side. But they have nothing to gain from having her step in on their side. For them it is enough to have the Pyrenees frontier, the Morocco lands, and the western paths of the Mediterranean free from danger, and at the same time to utilize Spain's maritime bases, as they did in the World War. What the Allies desire and what they undoubtedly will get from Franco is benevolent neutrality. As benevolent as in 1914-18, if not more so; a neutrality that would suffice to tie him, with all the political consequences, to the fate of Franco-British imperialism.

Part of the price of such an understanding would be, of course, the annihilation of those islands of Spanish democracy which have been created in England and France. The payment of this price has already begun. France does not need to garrison her Pyrenees frontier and the British Fleet has the free use of Spanish waters. In return, the Reynaud-Daladier government methodically destroys the soldiers of the Spanish republic, hands over to Franco's vengeance the heroes of the Spanish people.

Only a fool or traitor can say that Spanish democracy must seek support from Anglo-French imperialism and join its fate with that of the British and French empires. As in August 1936 when "non-intervention" was hatched in London and Paris, as on April 10, 1938, when the British signed the infamous pact with Italy, as in February 1939 when Britain engineered the Casado-Besteiro coup, Allied imperialism supports today and will always support Spanish reaction. Chamberlain and Reynaud, Hitler and Mussolini, Attlee and Blum—these are the names by which the Spanish people must recognize their enemies of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Equally must they recognize their friends of yesterday, today, and tomorrow: the Soviet Union—the only land which gave substantial help to republican Spain—and the masses of the people in all countries. Only these forces can bring true freedom and peace to Spain and the world.

CESAR FALCON.

Clinton

"There goes that correspondent—he just finished another White Paper."

Crusader's End

RECENTLY liberals everywhere were pleasantly shocked to read that Dennis J. Driscoll, chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, had been appointed one of three trustees of the bankrupt Associated Gas & Electric Co. The aging Mr. Driscoll, you remember, was the crusading congressman who exposed the fake telegram barrage, maneuvered by the utilities, against the Wheeler-Rayburn anti-holding company bill. His appointment to the AGE trusteeship was hailed by the *Nation* and *New Republic*.

Actually, what the appointment, and Driscoll's acceptance of it, means is that the utilities have regained their control over the Pennsylvania commission. A five-man board, the commission was in the hands of progressive Democrats appointed by former Governor Earle—there were three Democrats and two Republicans. Since Governor James could not remove the progressives on the board, the utilities offered Driscoll, the chairman, an AGE trusteeship, which pays an annual salary of $25,000. His job on the commission paid $10,500. Now the reactionaries have control of both the AGE and the commission itself. Apologized Driscoll for his sellout: "I'm getting along in years, and I must make some provision for the time when I no longer am able to work. . . ."

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"Cheers rang out on the floor of the exchange." . . . N. Y. "Post," May 10, 1940.

Mischa Richter

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The Attorney General's Dilemma

Senator Norris opens fire on Mr. Jackson for FBI activities. "If Jackson behaves himself, he may still be rewarded with the vice presidential nomination," says Adam Lapin. What price liberalism?

Washington, D. C.

WHEN Robert Jackson was named attorney general early this year, Sen. George W. Norris of Nebraska rejoiced and acclaimed it one of the greatest appointments the President had made. Last week the grand old man of the Senate informed his colleagues that he had a "painful" job to do, and for several hours he raked Jackson over the coals for his attempt to whitewash the Detroit raids by the FBI.

Four months had intervened between those two statements by Senator Norris. In those four months Jackson has wrestled with a great problem: the problem of a man who considers himself a devoted friend of civil liberties and at the same time is the highest law enforcing officer of an administration which is uprooting civil liberties as it pursues the road to war. Jackson has had time to think it over and he has wound up by applauding J. Edgar Hoover as an outstanding public servant and by standing behind his activities 100 percent.

Many government officials and newspapermen consider Jackson the outstanding liberal in public life. They have pinned their hopes on him all the more because other idols have fallen. Frank Murphy, who came to Washington a year and a half ago as hero of the New Dealers, has no halo now over his rim of red hair.

GREAT PROMISES

Jackson encouraged his friends to expect great things. Word was spread around that Jackson was wise to Hoover, that he would curb the FBI chief, that he would prevent a repetition of the Palmer raids. Also slated for some pretty tough going were Thurman Arnold and his union busters in the Anti-Trust Division. The new attorney general even went so far as to tell some of his friends that he did not believe in Murphy's entire procedure of prosecuting Communists on the ground that some of them occasionally spat on the sidewalk in violation of the sanitary code. One department official very close to Jackson said that his boss had been strongly opposed to American entry into the first world war, and that he was just as strongly opposed to getting into the second. All this added up to a large and hopeful program.

The new attorney general had hardly taken office when the FBI descended on loyalist sympathizers in Detroit. The story of that raid is pretty familiar, how the G-men swooped down at 5:00 a.m. on the homes of twelve persons charged with having recruited Americans for the Spanish Republican Army, chained the prisoners together, refused counsel. It was by far the rawest stunt pulled by the Department of Justice in many years. Jackson dismissed the indictments. He said that he didn't think it was "even-handed and impartial justice" to single the Detroit cases out of the thousands of violations of the laws against recruiting. That was a thrust at Murphy. So was Jackson's statement that his predecessor had not seen fit to prosecute these cases when they were "new and current." Significantly enough there were no cracks at Hoover. But before the accolade of praise is conferred on Jackson there is also this to consider: it would have looked pretty bad if the administration had cracked down in a big way on recruiting for loyalist Spain and done nothing to stop the recruiting for Mannerheim Finland which was then going on.

FBI ON THE SPOT

As a result of the Detroit raids, the activities of J. Edgar Hoover began to get some serious consideration. Senator Norris said it was about time the FBI was investigated. Representative Marcantonio of New York dubbed Hoover "the Stork Club detective," and assailed the elaborate card index system of all persons engaging "in any activities that are possibly detrimental to the internal security of the United States." Even the New York *Daily News* began to needle Hoover. The FBI chief was on the spot and somebody had to say something. Jackson came through. He said that he had queried department employees involved in the Detroit raids and found "nothing to justify" the widespread charges against the FBI. He revealed that he had talked things over with Hoover and that they were in agreement on general policies. Hoover, too, was for free speech and against turning the FBI into a Gestapo.

Still the protests against the FBI did not subside. Senator Norris complained again: he had said that Jackson's perfunctory investigation had heard only one side. So Jackson went through the motions of a more elaborate whitewash. Henry Schweinhaut, who heads the singularly inactive Civil Liberties Unit of the department, was sent down to Detroit. He came back with a masterpiece of evasion. He admitted one or two of the more glaring abuses, but he did this best to exonerate the FBI. For example, Schweinhaut did not deny that the defendants were chained together, but he said that that was done not by the FBI but by the United States marshal in Detroit. In addition, he emphasized that the FBI in its execution of the raids was simply carrying out the orders of superiors. That either the marshal or the higher-ups might come in for a little criticism was not even suggested.

Senator Norris, in his four-hour speech on the Senate floor, noted that the Schweinhaut report actually gave its approval to some of the most obnoxious activities of the FBI.

> I think such practices are detestable [Norris said]; to my mind they are detestable; and if the FBI pursues these kinds of methods in arresting anybody then the FBI ought to be reformed; and it seems to me that it is up to the attorney general of the United States to see that reform is brought about. I regret that the special assistant attorney general, Mr. Schweinhaut, believes such methods are proper.

Schweinhaut had described the breaking down of doors of private residences as "reasonable under the circumstances." He said that he thought the selection of 5 a.m. as the time for the raids was "perfectly justifiable." While he confessed that a search of private homes without a warrant might be stretching the law a little, he added that "there can be no doubt that the agents believed their procedure was perfectly proper."

In his letter transmitting the Schweinhaut report to Norris, Jackson went beyond the Detroit incident in commending the FBI. He said he was "confident that the more the operations of the bureau are explored the more it will appear that its vigorous and effective work for law enforcement is conducted with a fundamental purpose to observe the rights of defendants." The attorney general who was going to prevent Palmer raids has emerged as front man for the very maestro of the Palmer raid technique.

NEUTRALITY LAWS UNIT

Partly as a result of the Detroit raids Jackson proposed the formation of a new Neutrality Laws Unit in the Department of Justice. He is reported to have thought this up as a means of curbing Hoover. Whether or not this was so, White House Secretary Steve Early went out of his way the very morning the new unit was announced to emphasize that Hoover's powers would in no way be circumscribed. The official Justice Department handout said that the Neutrality Laws Unit would have the job of working together with the War, Navy, Treasury, and State departments in controlling prosecutions on charges of violating the laws relating to neutrality, foreign enlistments, treason, sedition, espionage, sabotage, and the like. The potentialities of such a unit are obvious. Whatever was in Jackson's mind, he has created an instrumentality for a more highly centralized and coordinated drive against the Communist Party or other groups that come under official disfavor in times of "emergency."

Meanwhile, other business at the Department of Justice has been going on pretty much the same as under the Murphy regime. Thurman Arnold's anti-trust drive against trade

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unions has been picking up momentum. Four leaders of the International Fur and Leather Workers Union have been sentenced to a year in jail. Of course it is just one of life's little coincidences that Arnold revived an old and musty charge against a union which has a number of Communists in its leadership.

For all of this, and more too, Jackson's friends have an answer. Arnold started the anti-trust prosecutions against unions on a large scale some time ago, and they can hardly be dropped all at once. The attorney general dislikes and distrusts Hoover, but the FBI boss has powerful friends and it would hardly do to break with him so soon.

These rationalizations are worth thinking about because they point to the fatal weakness in Jackson's position. Assume that he despises all of Murphy's Jesuitical devices, that his intentions are the best, his sincerity of the highest. So what? The attorney general is in a position where intentions do not count. It is his job to enforce the law for the Roosevelt administration in the way that the Roosevelt administration sees fit. And the administration's present policies don't dovetail with civil liberties. War preparations are not encouraging to free speech; they will become even less so as the threat of armed intervention in the war comes dangerously close. If the United States does get into the war, it will be up to the attorney general to take all the usual steps. J. Edgar Hoover will come in very handy then.

If Jackson behaves himself, he may still be rewarded with the vice presidential nomination as a liberal counterweight for a safe conservative like Hull—or perhaps with the presidency itself in 1944. If he doesn't, he sacrifices his political future in the Democratic Party. And the President can fire him.

Jackson's position inevitably makes him a symbol. He is a natural leader for those liberals in Washington and elsewhere who are clinging to the administration through relief cuts, Detroit raids, and the imminent possibility of American involvement in the war. He faces in the daily conduct of his job the dilemma of their whole political position. In his regime at the Department of Justice more than an individual is on trial. The very concept that progress and civil liberties are still compatible with the Roosevelt administration is being tested, and found wanting.

ADAM LAPIN.

Don't Tell Him

"CONGRESSMAN DIES evidently hasn't heard about it yet, or he'd be down here investigating Communistic activities of the pink boll worm."—*Editorial note in the Memphis "Commercial Appeal."*

Curio Dept.

HEADLINE in the New York *Post*, May 9: JOE ADONIS SURRENDERS—CHAMBERLAIN HANGS ON.

Mr. Dies and Mr. Deatherage

How a Knight of the White Camellias was investigated: "I am not asking you to identify any members . . . ."

THE quotations below from the record of the Dies committee are given as comment on that group's recent citing of Communist Party officials for contempt. The charges were based on the refusal of these officials to give Mr. Dies lists of their members to be published as a blacklist for industry. As contrast, let's see what happened when a fascist defied the committee to cite him for contempt because he refused even to give *the total number* of members of his organization.

On May 23, 1939, George Edward Deatherage of St. Albans, W. Va., national commander of the Knights of the White Camellia, since 1934, appeared before the Dies committee in public session, Martin Dies in the chair. The KWC is an organization founded at the same time and with the same objectives as the Ku Klux Klan, but apparently a more "patrician" membership, reserved for ex-officers of the Confederate Army, whereas the KKK took in privates. Deatherage was also the founder in 1938 of the American Nationalist Confederation, "a fascist party," with a swastika for its emblem. A few of the many details of his connections and activities serve perhaps further to identify his character: He "exchanged material" with William Dudley Pelley of the Silver Shirts, and with World Service Organization (Nazi press service), at Erfurt, Germany, and a similar fascist organization in Italy; he conferred on matters of policy "a thousand times" with James True (inventor of the Kike-Killer), whose Industrial Control Reports he also circulated; he distributed the anti-Semitic material of Gerald K. Winrod of Kansas; he corresponded and was "sympathetic with the basic philosophy" of Harry B. Bland, head of the anti-Semitic Anglo-Saxon Federation. Mr. Deatherage was one of the main promoters of General Van Horn Moseley to be commander of all the fascist forces in the United States and eventually to take over as the "strong man."

On May 23, Mr. Rhea Whitley, then counsel for the Dies committee, was questioning Mr. Deatherage about his Knights of the White Camellia. The following is from page 3427 of the printed transcript of the committee hearings:

WHITLEY: Is your own organization a membership organization?

DEATHERAGE: It is.

WHITLEY: How many chapters do you have, Mr. Deatherage?

DEATHERAGE: When I took my oath of office as commander of this organization there is one thing I promised on the value of my life never to reveal, and that is the number of members we had, the number of posts, and the members, and I am sorry I can't answer, and if that is in contempt of court and I have to go to jail, I am quite content.

WHITLEY: I am not asking you to identify any members, but as to the number of chapters or the number of members, I don't see where that would hurt anyone.

DEATHERAGE: It may not, but that is my oath and I am going to stay with it.

WHITLEY: Was that a voluntary oath?

DEATHERAGE: That is a compulsory oath.

WHITLEY: That you never reveal any of that information?

DEATHERAGE: That is right, and that oath is the same as a klansman's oath.

WHITLEY: Does each member of your organization have to take a similar oath?

DEATHERAGE: He does.

WHITLEY: And it is 100 percent secret, sub rosa organization as far as the membership is concerned?

DEATHERAGE: That is right.

WHITLEY: You, as its national commander, are the only one who is publicly identified with the organization; is that correct?

DEATHERAGE: Well, it would be difficult to answer that. The Jews have been watching this thing so much that they have got certain fellows identified. But as far as the fellow who comes out and sticks his neck out in the open, that is me.

WHITLEY: You are the national commander publicly identified as in that position, and with reference to your association with your organization?

DEATHERAGE: Official goat; yes, sir.

WHITLEY: You mentioned your organization and Mr. Pelley's as being the two largest—you wouldn't, for the information of the committee, you couldn't possibly even indicate approximately what your membership is? I am not asking you to give the exact figures if that is against the rules.

DEATHERAGE: It is against my oath; I am sorry, I can't answer.

WHITLEY: Would you say it is nationwide?

DEATHERAGE: Well, with the exception of the New England states, which are so blinking stubborn we can't do anything with them.

WHITLEY: Otherwise, in all sections of the country you have your local chapters?

DEATHERAGE: That is right.

And after that what happened? Wasn't Mr. Deatherage cited for contempt for refusal to give Mr. Dies his list of fascists?

Not a bit of it. The committee hearings just went on, with Mr. Whitley asking routine questions, producing a few documents, Mr. Deatherage using the committee room as a forum for anti-Semitism and fascism, and Mr. Voorhis gently discussing philosophy with him in the nicest, most considerate way. But there are no proceedings on contempt charges against Deatherage.

Of course, elsewhere in the record there are plenty of similar examples. For instance, there are several places where Mr. Dies prevented his own agent from putting into the public record any list of those who bought large quantities of Mr. Pelley's filthy anti-Semitic literature for redistribution. It isn't that the gentleman from Texas loves his country less. Rather, it seems, he loves his fascists more.

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Elmer Is a Banker

Isidor Schneider takes a look at the Big Show on Flushing Meadows. Tomorrow's World is missing. Good-by Grover.

LAST year it was stuffed shirts; this year it is press agents. The front put on by the 1939 Fair was mostly ceremony; in the 1940 Fair, it is mostly and frankly ballyhoo. Grover Whalen has been retired to a back seat; but Harvey D. Gibson, the banker who is now running the show, has shrewdly turned the spotlight seat over to Elmer, the "typical" American, who is most typical as a product of press agent typewriters.

Poor Grover Whalen didn't get the breaks. He surrounded himself with the best people, social, financial, esthetical, and scientifical; and this combination charity committee and brain trust produced a neat prospectus, "World of Tomorrow," premised on a capitalist world that was still up and coming, that would hold together by appeasement, or somehow.

Before the opening democratic Spain was assassinated; and Albania and Czechoslovakia became victims of the large scale imperialist cannibalism to which the capitalist world had reverted. And while the fair was going on World War II exploded—among other places right in the World of Tomorrow's face.

Held a year earlier the Flushing fantasia might have gone over and Mr. Whalen's top hat might have emerged unbowed. History, however, was against him. The fair proceedings, which Mr. Whalen apparently counted on for certain higher ambitions, went the wrong way. A shining candidate for anything at the beginning of the fair, the end of the fair seems to have left Mr. Whalen out of the running for anything except chairman of a subdued greeters' committee.

The opening ceremony was a sign of the change. It was performed mostly in business suits. Top hats were scarcely in evidence. Last year's effort to make the fair look like a livelier Geneva, a bigger and better League of Nations, was gone. It will probably not be missed. Top hats and cutaways were all over the place last year and the pall of diplomatic solemnities was over some of the best occasions. The strenuous occupation of eating good dinners and saying a few well chosen words, well chosen to add up to nothing, took the time of, it seemed, innumerable commissioners and deputy commissioners. Their job this year will be done more directly by "public relations counsel."

Their chief effect last year was to bolster up the snob appeal on which last year's fair opened its publicity drive. It was what all but the Soviet commissioners wanted. Naturally it was hard for Mr. Whalen and his socialites and annoying for the various barons and counts who had been appointed to represent the "democracies," etc., of western Europe, to keep the plain American people in mind. For example, there had been a plan to present national music festivals in connection with the fair. And the commissioners debated whether to hold the music festivals in a Manhattan auditorium or on the fair grounds, where a theater for that purpose had been built. In a Manhattan auditorium, decided the commissioners, since it would be an inconvenience to those who cannot hear music, unless acoustically uniformed in evening dress, to drag their trains and coattails out all the way to the fair grounds. Most of the performances were therefore held in Manhattan auditoriums.

However, it meant snob publicity and snob appeal. It helped to promote the sense of exclusiveness. Mr. Whalen's brain trust calculated that, when it was made so tony, the Great American Goof would go broke getting in. And it would all serve as more justification for occasions where Mr. Whalen would appear immaculate in his cutaway and an assortment of notables saying those few well chosen echoes.

Snob appeal had to be abandoned for a version of democracy. Admissions had to be reduced. Cheaper eating places had to be provided. And the World of Tomorrow slogan proved embarrassing because the one place where it seemed relevant was the Soviet pavilion. There the world of tomorrow was shown, in action, today. There, atop the pavilion and, next to the trylon and perisphere, the chief landmark of the fair, stood the Soviet worker, very visible, who symbolized the unity of the worker of hand and brain—every worker at the cultural level of the intellectual and every intellectual a worker.

Naturally, having become the hit of the fair, it became the target of reaction. Reaction has spread until, in many of his speeches, the formerly "progressive" Mayor LaGuardia yelps like the reactionaries. Last year the mayor hailed the Soviet pavilion and noted that it represented a nation founded like the United States on liberties secured by revolution. This year, speaking the Hearstian patter of identity between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, he professed to rejoice at the absence of a Soviet pavilion.

There have been other signs, despite the democratic notes being pounded on the ballyhoo drums. With the discarding of the World of Tomorrow slogan a new one had to be devised. "For Democracy and Freedom" was chosen, as comprising two items obviously popular with the American people. A proposal to canvass the fairgoer's opinion under these heads led, however, to the resignation of a large contingent of a "best people" woman's committee who were afraid apparently that the answers would be subversive, or that the best answers would be given by "subversive elements."

The slogan, in effect, is "Hello, Folks," just meaning anything you want when in a picnic mood. With that the 1940 Fair has started in a democratic level carefully graded by the press agent. Elmer the typical American is the salesman in apotheosis. His sell-anything smile is expected to sell the fair to America, if anything can these days.

Last year's dignity is gone. The cheese cake (press agent slang for the publicity use of pretty girls in the near nude) is being cut thicker this year. The Midway is longer, grander, and warmer. Vulgarity—the classic capitalist concept of democracy—is given a freer hand.

Nevertheless the fair remains bright. The first day's crowds looked to me like a continuation of the crowds of the closing weeks of the 1939 Fair when they had learned to take things comfortably and unawed. The people obviously come to the fair because it is an unusual picnic ground with numbers of pleasant attractions. They finish off their bag lunches with drinks and sweets at the stands. And they go for the educational sights in the foreign pavilions and the big industrial exhibits. After 10:00 p.m. the crowd may dance and go to the "flesh shows." But the daytime and early evening crowds go to admire human achievement, no matter how distorted its presentation.

What the fair seems to prove is that human ingenuity, skill, and aspiration, as expressed in invention, art, and technique are considered most worth seeing. That was the basis of the lure of the Aquacade, the hit of the fair, where ballet ingenuity and beauty was the essential attraction. These basic elements of human interest and pride survive all the degradation and abuse of capitalist decadence. They remain the real attractions of the fair.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Melody for the Virginals

Contrive to cheat despair
With an old hope
Long laid by;
Cry to alien air—
This is wrong.

This will never help
Nor the salt tear
Be pretty any more:
Now whose song
Tells no lie?

Graces, airs of woe
Suit the unstrung wire
Of a mute harp
Laid by long,
Who knows where?
Far from here.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

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War Dance of the Bluebloods

James Dugan soberly witnesses the Astor ball for the Allied Relief Fund. Is it ARF to AEF? The millionaires have a hot time.

THE Allied Relief Ball was held at the Astor in New York on the night of May 10 after a day of black headlines and roaring radio flashes announcing the Total War. "As at the ball before Waterloo," said the *Herald Tribune* next morning, "men and women in scarlet coats, military uniforms, and colorful costumes danced while the armies fought it out in another setting."

I ventured into the temporary shrine of Western civilization shortly after 12 a.m. and found myself in step behind a tall man dressed as a Bedouin who was escorting a young lady dressed as Mme. Pompadour. They arrived at a second floor suite with your correspondent still following. In the foyer of the suite was a bar with three attendants. The adjoining four rooms contained red-faced men dressed as Foreign Legionnaires, second "leftenants" in the 6th Royal North Surrey, and Arab rug peddlers. Each was vaguely attached to a woman and seemed to view sitting down as vital as the defense of Western civilization. I enjoyed looking at these unselfish patriots until a member of the party became suspicious of a suit of Howard clothes standing so near the champagne and asked me to leave.

In the hallway an old, wizened man dressed as a Northwest Mounted Policeman was stumbling along. He kept saying, "Room 188, Room 188," and throwing his hand out ahead of him for any support that offered itself. Being a man who always gets my Northwest Mounted Policeman, I helped him to 188.

I found a small stair which led down to the mezzanine and a Burns cop. As I was arguing in an effort to get past, the old Northwest Mounted Policeman half fell down the steps at our feet. It was easy to walk away while they were picking him up. I found myself in Noel Coward's Star Club, admission $10, where Mr. Coward, a shocking-looking person who seems to have no blood in him and a voice like a cultivated brothel proprietress, was singing for an enchanted group. Eddie Cantor came—he has blood in him—and the crowd of people with wrecked faces gave him the indulgent applause they bestow on one of a lower order who has come to their side. Mr. Coward hastened Cantor through his song and began shrilly to order the crowd to leave so more might come in and pay the $10.

ENTERTAINMENT

Downstairs a vast crowd was shuffling around while four stickysweet orchestras took turns playing. The famous artist, Neysa McMein, stood out on a runway screaming above the din about a peepshow; in a booth along the side Irving Berlin and Cole Porter with rings under their eyes, played and sang. Twenty John Powers models managed a huge grab bag, where for a dollar the rich folk could pull out a Pinocchio doll. There was a clever booth where one threw a baseball at a target; if struck true, the target dumped a half nude young woman out of bed.

In the lobby I found a young man in a green suit, leaning against a pillar and admiring the strolling guests. "What are you doing here," I asked. "You look human." He was waiting to apply to the manager of the hotel for a bellhop's position. He yearned to see the ball so I told him an old college boy trick for crashing a dance. Guests who left the dance floor were stamped on the hand with a green royal crest and the letters "ARF." We found two drunken fellows who had been newly stamped, grasped their hands and received faint impressions of the crest—in reverse, but good enough to get by the doorman.

Two crashes in a row called for a drink. The would-be bellhop and I sat down in a miniature version of the Stork Club and ordered drinks at a dollar apiece. The patrons of the booth stared at us very impolitely, I thought, as though persons from the street were decidedly unwelcome sympathizers with the American Auxiliary Committee de l'Union des Femmes de France or Bundles for Britain.

The would-be bellhop and I stared into the diplomatic boxes, where Lord Lothian, Count Rene Doynel de Saint-Quentin, Count Jerzhy Potocki, and Wilhelm Munthe de Morgenstierne, minister from Norway, all great living exponents of Democracy, looked benignly down on the gay, altruistic throng. Every once in a while one of the guests would fall down, overcome by compassion for the non-combatants.

CIVILIZATION SAVIORS

It was a famous victory for international morality; one wished that Mrs. S. Stanwood Mencken, the peacock lady, had not passed on. She could have graced the gathering and the rotogravures. Tanis Deitz was chairman; her maiden name was Guiness, and her father's spirits are indispensable to the morale of any army of Western civilization. Whitney Bourne, a blonde young woman married to Stanton Griffis of Madison Square Garden and Paramount Pictures, ran the shell games, and Mrs. George Kaufman was on the committee. Robert Sherwood was there, the tall playwright who thinks Americans are such rotters for standing by while civilization totters.

There were possibly three people in the room who muddle along on under $10,000 a year. I found one of them in the bar, a dour proprietor of a printing establishment who said some of his employees made as much as he did. With him was a well known lady of Broadway and Hollywood, a member of the ball committee. I asked her if she realized that there were no working people at the ball, yet they were going to have to fight the war the people upstairs were pushing us into. "You are a very rude young man," she said. I asked her if she was equally interested in the twelve million unemployed in this country. The printing executive said very calmly and genially that he was not bothered by the unemployed in this country. I congratulated him on his frankness and reminded him that there were millions of people more interested in jobs than the receivership of the British empire. The lady's eyes clouded and she suddenly said, "I hate this ball."

She said it was one of those things you promised in November to do in May. May would never come, you thought; but here it was and she felt uneasy. No one should get the idea she wanted to get us into the war.

I said that Roosevelt and the mob upstairs were shoving us toward war so fast it would make your head swim. The printing executive shot his hand out, "That's the first thing you said tonight that I can agree with—that —— —— Roosevelt."

"But, he's on your side. He wants to save England as much as you do."

"I don't trust him," he said.

"I WON'T FIGHT"

The would-be bellhop came in, smoking a 25-cent cigar, and a bored young man in tails and white tie who proclaimed himself a pacifist began buying him drinks. The would-be bellhop looked around at the confusion of costumes and said, "Imagine me here, in the Astor, smoking a 25-cent cigar." The young man in tails said, "Damn it, I won't fight. I'll go to Leavenworth first." The printing executive left, saying, "Let's face it: we can't keep out of it." Peter Arno came in at 3:00 a.m. A fat boy dressed as a Stuart cavalier fell and upset a table.

The lady who was on the committee said, "Let's have a cup of coffee." Outside two Negro scrubwomen walked past and the cab drivers yawned under the marquee. Little did they know as they went their heedless rounds that the people inside the Astor were saving their way of life. JAMES DUGAN.

Shades of Lincoln

A CITIZEN of New Hampshire read the state constitution the other day and was considerably surprised to discover:

Article 10—Right of Revolution: Government being instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the whole community and not for the interests or emoluments of any one man, family, or class of men; therefore, whenever the ends of government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress ineffectual, the people may, and of right ought to, reform the old, or establish a new government. The doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish, and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.

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★

Congressional Week

WITH the relief question, among others, still to be settled, congressmen are getting as homesick as a college student facing final exams. Last week the House voted on the Senate's farm appropriations. It retained the $212,000,000 for benefit payments—omitted from FDR's budget but inserted by the Senate—and the $85,000,000 for surplus crop disposal. At this writing the highly important $50,000,000 appropriation for farm tenant aid is still under consideration. So far, at least, Congress seems to know somewhat better answers to the farm problem than the President does. The latter has vetoed the bill to extend crop insurance to cotton—reasons of "economy." He explained that such insurance, as shown by experiment with the wheat crop, benefited the growers but cost the government too much. It has cost, according to his own figure, around $1,500,000, or about one thirty-third the price of one battleship.

Representatives will soon have to answer yes or no on at least three major relief tests: the budget figure of $985,000,000 for WPA; the President's request that Congress let him spend that amount or less, as he chooses, in eight months; and the Marcantonio relief estimate of $3,000,000,000 to provide three million jobs. Only votes for the Marcantonio measure deserve to be graded "A." The people, who will do the grading, should make this plain to their congressmen.

The Senate Judiciary Committee is doing some ominous studying on how to bring the Walter-Logan bill to a vote. A subcommittee has prepared some amendments to make it less drastic but the measure is still nothing but an effort to cripple regulatory agencies like NLRB and the Pure Food and Drug Administration by subjecting their rulings to court review. Reports that the drug lobby really authored the bill should surprise no one who knows anything about these gentlemen's past reliance on judicial processes to protect their sacred right of selling death in medicine bottles.

The Slumber of TNEC

THE Temporary National Economic Committee (monopoly committee) has decided to crawl into its tree trunk and hibernate till after the elections. In fact, its slumbers may be rather prolonged. According to the May 10 issue of the *United States News*, "The outlook now is that whatever match TNEC can light to shine on a new reform movement must await the end of the war. And then conditions may be so changed that the match cannot be scratched."

The TNEC has during the past few months shown signs of premature feebleness and a strong desire for rest. The committee dates back to that dim glacial era when the Roosevelt administration was really fighting the monopolies. In his message of April 29, 1938, urging the creation of the committee the President pointed to the fact that "today a concentration of private power without equal in history is growing." He warned that democracy itself was threatened. But all that was in the New Deal days. Today Roosevelt is fattening the trusts with the raw meat of war profits. He is himself helping them undermine democracy with attacks on the trade unions, on the Communist Party, and other progressive groups. Only the other day Ass't Atty. Gen. Thurman Arnold announced he would not investigate the food trust, one of the worst gougers of the people, because his department had no funds. But Arnold lacks no funds for cracking down on the trade unions.

Last week's Supreme Court decision upholding the conviction of twelve oil companies and five of their officials for conspiracy to violate the Sherman Anti-Trust law is another echo of the past. Evidently the court hasn't caught up with the latest fashions. These convictions were obtained in the pre-war days, when the administration was making some efforts, pitifully inadequate, it is true, to make the trusts behave. Nowadays all such matters are either ignored or arranged through what are known as "consent decrees," which in effect amount to saying: "Go and sin no more." The oil convictions involve extremely small penalties, $5,000 each for the companies and $1,000 each for the individuals. Compare these with the one-year jail sentence and $2,500 fine meted out to Ben Gold, president of the International Fur and Leather Workers Union, and similar penalties for ten of his associates for the great crime of making union organization effective.

Labor's Alternative

VIOLENT jousting for honors continues between the elephant and the donkey. Tom Dewey couldn't bear to watch Thurman Arnold run off with all the union-busting honors. So the GOP's leading contender—at heart still a junior G-man—sent a couple of agents to Atlantic City where the Building Service Employees International Union was in convention. The Dewey dicks bustled their way through the ranks of delegates and served grand jury papers on William McFetridge, newly elected president, and Thomas J. Burke, first vice president. Two other officials were served.

Thus the harassment of labor continues. The incumbent administration pursues its high-handed course and the outs seek to go them one better. The seventy thousand members of the building service union are up in arms at this latest attempt to smear their union—and labor nationally sees it has little to choose between FDR and his possible successor. Labor has no alternative—except to build a powerful third party, one that can end these dictatorial raids upon workingmen's rights.

Civil Rights in the ACLU

THESE are the days when democracy must keep an eye on the fair-weather patriots. And many Americans are eying the majority of the board of the American Civil Liberties Union since their vote—twelve to nine—to expel Elizabeth Gurley Flynn from their ranks because she is a Communist. The balloting took place in a star-chamber atmosphere, with Miss Flynn barred from the room.

Miss Flynn—and many others—have challenged the entire procedure as contrary to the principles and purposes of the ACLU. How does the expulsion jibe with the April 1939 statement: "The union does not engage in political controversy. It takes no position on any political or economic issue or system. . . . It is wholly unconcerned with movements abroad or with foreign governments." And previously, in September 1939, "The National Committee and Board of Directors represent every shade of economic and political opinion."

One comes inevitably to this conclusion: Is not the ACLU today demanding conformity of political and economic views as the price of leadership? Are progressives to be penalized because they hold minority opinions? Must one subscribe to the fundamental tenets of the National Association of Manufacturers to remain on the "controlling committee" of the ACLU?

Further questions are being asked: Why was Miss Flynn, a charter member and concededly still a member of the board, barred from the vote on her expulsion? The whole business was carried off in a high-handed manner that is as revealing as it is revolting. And what consistency can the board majority claim when they stated last week: "The union's membership is open to Communists as to all others, as it always has been. . . ." Does this mean what it appears to mean—that the minority has the right to participate, to carry through decisions, but not the right to be represented on the governing body? "It is analogous," Miss Flynn says, "to the deprivation of civil rights to German citizens because they are Jews. . . . It is analogous to the Devaney law recently passed in New York State denying Communists the right to hold public positions." Miss Flynn rightly rejects the status of "second class citizenship."

It is indeed a sorry day when civil liberties must be defended within the ranks of the American Civil Liberties Union itself. The board decision is subject to the approval of the National Committee. Certainly, if the latter reflects the will of the rank and file membership, the sinister vote will be set aside and the fundamental principles of the union vindicated.

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"Surplus" Farm Babies

The most serious problem of overproduction on American farms concerns not little pigs, which in an emergency can be slaughtered, nor corn, which can be stored against some future crop failure, but children, who can neither be plowed under nor warehoused, the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee of the Senate was told today.—*Byron Darnton, New York "Times," May 9.*

And what happens, in a great big capitalist country, to little farm children who cannot be plowed under or warehoused? They grow up into migrants and farm tenants. They take their place among the 1,700,000 farm families with net incomes of about $25 a month. Thousands of them are sheltered in sod houses and modified dugouts. Few will get any decent schooling. Their home may be a jalopy and their parents are lucky if they get six months' work a year. Many will starve before they are even old enough to know what "vigilante" means.

But this is just a hundredth part of the picture that government experts are presenting at the La Follette committee hearing on farm labor. The committee heard that at least one-third of the nation's farm families "are living on standards so low as to make them slum families," that there are nearly three million people subsisting on land so poor that it will literally starve the families who continue to farm it. Farm industrialization is further cutting down the labor market, and there are large groups of "Okies and Arkies" in every regional area of America.

When the testimony is complete, it will be presented to Congress as a basis for some legislative action. Few of the witnesses thus far have made any suggestions for such legislation. Secretary of Labor Perkins' idea that social security and wage-hour laws should be extended to farm labor is commendable, but it is not enough. It is time the committee heard representatives of the UCAPAWA and the Farmers Union. Their testimony might silence men like Capt. Joseph Patterson, whose New York *Daily News* offers a simple, cold-blooded proposal for solving the problem of farm youth "surpluses": to turn them over to the Brass Hats for "technical" war training.

Communist Party Convention

Georgi Dimitrov said on May Day that the Communists alone have withstood the crucial test of war, have stood their ground for peace. It is evident in this country as one observes the membership of the Communist Party calmly going about their task, explaining the nature of the imperialist conflict, tirelessly laboring to offset the assaults of the jingoists. There is confident stirring in the ranks as regional conventions are held preparatory to the great nominating convention, to take place in New York, May 30 to June 1.

Three national networks, CBS, NBC, and Mutual, will carry the words of William Z. Foster, Earl Browder, and James Ford at Madison Square Garden, June 2. That is a day to underscore on the calendar—a day to set aside. All in New York who don't want their bones to bleach on a European battlefield, will try to get into the Garden that day. Others, west of the Hudson, will stay close to their radios. The American people, overwhelmingly desirous of peace, will do well to heed the words of these tested champions of the people. The most crucial debate of our times is on; we believe these men have the great answer. And they are prepared to stake their lives or liberty to translate their words into reality. Communists are not summer soldiers.

Liberals' Road to War

The pattern of liberal betrayal of liberalism in wartime is repeating itself. Remembrance of things past rises from the pages of the *Nation* and *New Republic*. These two organs of what passes for liberal opinion are now devoting themselves, as in 1917, to putting the best face on the worst follies and crimes. The *Nation* has for long been plumping for the Allies and for every iota of the Roosevelt foreign policy; months before Alfred Duff Cooper made his speech demanding a war to the death on the entire German people, the *Nation* published an article by Robert Dell with precisely this demand. Now the once-isolationist *New Republic* rushes in where reaction as yet fears to tread openly; in its May 13 issue it has gone a step ahead of the Roosevelt administration and calls for our entry into the war if the Allies should be on the verge of defeat.

In a long editorial, "The Lesson of Norway," the *New Republic* says some rather harsh things about the British ruling class: ". . . the nobility, the landowners, the squires and the industrial and financial magnates have been shrewd, stubborn, and unscrupulous in their resolution to hold ultimate power behind a facade of democratic pretension." In fact the editors by implication make out a very persuasive case for keeping America as far away as possible from entanglement with the anti-democratic aims of this tory gang. But taking fright at their own sanity, the editors then close their eyes and make the plunge:

> We should continue to supply them [the Allies] with economic resources, as we are doing. But we should also let it be clearly understood when and under what circumstances our military and naval force would be called into play. It cannot be used to aid Allied triumph and impose on Europe peace terms which are not our business. But it can and must be used to prevent Hitler from garnering those fruits of victory which would immediately endanger us. Suppose, for instance, he accomplished the not incredible feat of invading Britain and bringing the British to their knees. Suppose the axis then demanded the surrender of the Allied fleets. We could not calmly stand by and let them obtain naval power enough to threaten us.

The *New Republic* concludes by calling for huge armaments, including "an impregnable navy, designed for defense rather than attack in distant waters," a modern air force, and a "highly mobile army, designed not for foreign invasion but for resistance to attack," forgetting—or has it really forgotten?—that it has just proposed that the United States *attack* Germany in order to rescue the Allied fleet. It is both sad and sickening.

Mother's Day, 1940

The mothers took Mother's Day away from the florists and dedicated it to the struggle against war and hunger. They said it with rallies and programs: their sons are not coming. "Mothers say no in 1940," declared Dr. Annette Rubinstein, vice president of the New York Peace Association, at the Mothers Peace Luncheon. In Detroit mothers and wives of automobile workers marched for peace. "Give our sons work, not guns," proclaimed one of their slogans. In Washington the Daughters of Depression conference marked the day by selecting America's Typical Unemployed Mother.

These Daughters—women on relief, on WPA, or wives of men on WPA and relief—came to the capital from all over the nation to expose conditions under which the unemployed live. They treated Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and other Washington notables to the 5-cent meal allowed women relief clients. Women doctors and social workers related the facts of life on relief to a Women's Jury made up of prominent Washingtonians. The delegates held a fashion show, featuring costumes for "the well dressed woman on relief." Their committees went through congressional corridors and into the White House demanding that WPA layoffs be stopped, cuts rescinded, appropriations raised.

The League of Women Shoppers, which also held its convention this past week, joined "with organized labor in opposition to American participation in the present war" and reaffirmed its stand against any abrogation of civil liberties and the rights of labor.

Whistler's mother would probably have fainted at such spectacles. But Susan B. Anthony—to say nothing of Mother Jones—would have understood.

Ammunition for Lynching

How the Association of Southern Women reached its conclusion that the last twelve months was a "lynchless year" is a puzzle to folks who keep an eye on the news. The association explains that lynch parties are being controlled by radio and motor patrols; thus the South's "new record." But what about the policemen who often lead the mobs? What of the new lynching technique wherein, to avoid publicity, the victim is quietly spirited away and his body dropped into a river or left beside a highway? Obviously the association's figures do not account for the three persons, all white, who lost their lives to Klan-led mobs during the month of March. The association's report will probably provide more ammunition for the Negro-hating Senator Connally of Texas who has used this group's earlier statistics to support his opposition to

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any kind of federal legislation against lynching.

Meanwhile the Anti-Lynching Bill remains undecided in the Senate. In his recent reply to the NAACP's query as to when the bill would be taken up, Senator Barkley of Kentucky indicated that the administration prefers to play ball with the Southern senators in opposition to the will of the people. The administration's attitude is as brutal as it is cynical. Supporters of the bill are now convinced that only intense political pressure will bring it to the floor. Steps toward applying such pressure are being taken by the new coalition of the National Negro Congress and Labor's Non-Partisan League, who have announced that they will use their energies "instantly and simultaneously" in a crusade to see that the measure becomes law.

Manufacturing a Purge

LAST week the newspapers treated themselves to a good old-fashioned purge. True, it was entirely synthetic, but it was marvelous while it lasted—which wasn't long. We refer, of course, to *l'affaire* Voroshilov. On Tuesday the Soviet government announced that Voroshilov had been shifted from his post as commissar for defense to assistant chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and chairman of the Council's defense committee. Whereupon loud lamentation broke out in the American press. "Another Old Bolshevik has bitten the dust politically," wailed Comrade Patterson's New York *Daily News*. (The readers had been under the impression that all the old Bolsheviks had been purged long ago and that Voroshilov was just an upstart.) "The real reason for his removal may be obscure," mourned the *Herald Tribune*, "but it is certain that if the removal follows the pattern of the removal of other old Bolsheviks, it means the end of not only Voroshilov's career, but also that of his friends." And Mrs. Ogden Reid's editorial writer shed a few tears over the imminent liquidation of one of these friends, Marshal Budenny.

Ludwig Lore of the New York *Post* enjoyed the best purge of all. "Today's column," he wrote, "is dedicated to three men who passed out of public life this week." The three were Chamberlain, Voroshilov, and George Lansbury, former leader of the Labor Party. (Lore was right about Lansbury—he really is dead.) "With the forced resignation of Marshal Voroshilov as Soviet people's commissar of defense one of the few remaining old Bolsheviks disappears from the scene of the Kremlin never to return."

On Thursday a United Press dispatch from Moscow blew away these too-salt tears:

> Marshal Voroshilov's new post was interpreted by some foreign military attaches as a promotion rather than a reduction in authority because, as head of the Council [of People's Commissars] defense committee, he will coordinate all defense forces, including the naval and war industries. . . . Marshal Voroshilov, it was said, probably will hold more individual authority in the future than any man in the Red Army's history.

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"Native Son": Pros and Cons

"New Masses" readers have their say on the most widely discussed book in America. A few samples from a heavy mail bag.

I WANT to thank the many readers of NEW MASSES who have accepted my invitation to send in their comments on Richard Wright's *Native Son*. The novel has provided the occasion for a wide and stimulating discussion of literary problems. It is impossible to reprint all the letters in full. The representative expressions of opinion appearing in this issue will be supplemented by other letters to be published very soon. In order to conserve as much space as possible for the following excerpts, I have resisted the strong temptation to discuss my points of disagreement with several of them.

Eugene Holmes, instructor of philosophy at Howard University, writes:

I have had many varying experiences with *Native Son,* the most recent being the discussion of the novel at the Cultural Freedom Panel of the National Negro Congress. I was chairman of that panel and a very enthusiastic panel it was, so that I had an opportunity to listen to a real cross-section of analysis. As Sterling Brown pointed out in speaking about the book, the mere historical fact that *Native Son* had aroused the kinds of controversies we are witnessing is splendid testimony to its vitality. I am one of those who agree with you and with Mike Gold that we do not have to fear much from the antipathetic reviewers and the ilk they represent. This is a natural complement to the reception of such a book.

I don't want to discuss your review and follow-up articles, or agree with them in toto so much as I want to point out additional analogical references in the novel. I agree, however, that Wright's book does hold out for a revolutionary vision of life. I believe too that Wright's handling of this kind of psychological novel form has heightened literature and given it new esthetic life; within this form alone there is a new meaning to revolutionary literature. This dramatic realism you spoke of is more than that; it is powerhouse and arsenal in one, so powerful that it succeeds in doing something to everyone's values and meanings. When a novel can hit that hard it is of the stuff of dynamite.

One other thing that all of the hostile critics overlook is Wright's own admonitions to writers. You pointed them out March 5 and April 23, but that must be reemphasized: his urging us to explore the meanings in our own lives, and to write about what one knows, and nothing else. Those who wanted him to include Negro Communists, militant and intellectual Negroes, a widespread community awakening, and all the other things, wanted what Wright didn't write about. But Dick wrote of the Bigger Thomases and that was the story. That is the fact and the problem too, and Dick had no intention of making it an easy one.

You did us a service in your April 23 article on the reception of the book. Since I have heard some perfectionists criticize that, too, by saying that your two hundred press samples were too one-sided, I hasten to add that they were not only fair, but leaned a little the other way by showing typical attitudes. That was a necessary job, and it might be added that the quality magazines and every section of the press have set their hawks to it with compound magnifiers. *Atlantic Monthly* scored a beautiful boner with David Cohn's slithering review and Burton Rascoe reminiscing all over the lot in *American Mercury.* You might have pointed out, too, that there were many positive reasons behind the significant fact that for three weeks the book was a best seller in New Orleans, Atlanta, and Richmond, Va. Maybe these bookstores are not barometric, but the South *is changing,* if only slowly.

Finally, for the record and to the purists, let me iterate my heartiest agreement on the following points you made. No, in no novel, let alone one like *Native Son,* can we consider events and characters apart from their context and development. Nor can we fail to see the relation in this book between its social and esthetic effects. And you are right when you say that this novel must be taken as a whole, as a planned accumulation, and we must not take what we want out of context and hold it up to refracted analysis. Why do the detractors resent the *creative* character of Bigger? It is because they do not see Bigger as a pole around which the social pressures meet the resistance of this positive and creative individual. It is because they do not see that there is in Bigger the need and the urge to create something better than the damning world known by Bigger. You were right to point out that Bigger is a rebel, that underneath Bigger was tender, that these things, plus his changed attitude toward Jan, all emerge into a new conception of an individual. I must enter into the lists along with you in your penetrating reminder of Jan's failure to understand personality problems as being a genuine condition which cannot be dismissed. I for one cannot agree with the pretty prevalent notions about Mr. Max. For me Mr. Max is a beautifully drawn character. True, his speech may have been set and overdrawn; there are, I am sure, many other elements from the esthetic and the legal point of view where Mr. Max went off the other end. But it is Mr. Max's speech and his character in themselves which have impressed every Negro with whom I have discussed the book. These Negroes were not politically conscious, but the warmth of Mr. Max, his understanding nature, and his unpatronizing air are all the things that endeared Mr. Max to these readers and made him a positive figure in the book.

Chester B. Hines, whose short stories have appeared in leading magazines, writes from Cleveland:

Bigger Thomas came alive to me when he stood on the street in front of the poolroom and got a sudden glimpse of life, feeling it push down inside of him through his shell of hard indifference which was his only defense against it. He saw the beauty of it in a pigeon, the majesty of it in the sky. He saw white men flying planes and envied them. He realized, for that brief instant, the importance of being a part of life, of being an individual, doing things, assuming an identity. At that moment Bigger was neither black nor white; he was just another youth with more than average potentialities in this living, peopled world.

When a person can see and feel the beauty and importance of the vast, eternal, changing mystery of life, and yearn to be a part of it, no one can truthfully say that person is a "bad nigger" with all the degradation which that chauvinist term implies. That person has a soul above the brutal ugliness of living, nor will anything he ever does take it away from him.

If a scientist took a white child and killed its brain and all the elements of humanity which it possessed outside of the normal physical functioning of its body, people would cry aloud with the horror of it. But when Bigger stood there on the street and got a glimpse of the moving eternity of life, feeling it move by him, feeling himself nailed into obscurity by a great white world, and yearning so intensely to be a part of it, he realized that the slow process of living a black boy's life in white America was slowly killing every human quality which he possessed, and his whole soul cried out in protest against it—an inarticulate, incomprehensible protest even to himself—but so strong a protest that it choked him like a great hand about his throat.

Because all of his life he had lived in fear of white people, he was afraid of them instinctively. It was as much a part of his life to be afraid of them as it was his lot to be black, because the knowledge of his fear had been driven into his brain with lynchings and Jim Crowism like a nail through his brain. He hated himself for being afraid, and hated them because they made him afraid. He had to hate them to keep himself a human being, knowing that when he gave in to being afraid of them without hating them he would lose everything which impelled his desire to fly a plane or build a bridge. He knew, in that lucid moment, without knowing how he knew, that his mother and most of the black folk whom he knew had offered up their identities in this living, peopled world to religion or a complete resignation, hoping at best for nothing more than some form of identity in the next.

From that moment when Bigger looked at that plane etched in flight against the sky and wished inarticulately that he was white so he could do things and be someone in this world, there was no hope for him. You knew if he continued to live in America with white folks in his belly he was going to stick his head up through the ceiling and get it hammered down.

He killed the girl. That was more inexorable than accidental. Something had to happen to him because his whole being was pushing him outside of the pattern of black surrender. But after he had done it, he made himself believe that it had not been accidental but deliberate, because by feeling that he had deliberately killed a white woman he had broken through the pattern and through all white oppression and had accomplished something that made him different and above and

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beyond the black sameness of Gus and Jack and all the other black folk whom he knew who had surrendered their identity to an unimportant, obscure, inferior sameness. Believing such made him, a black, ignorant boy, important in the only way in which he would ever have a chance to achieve importance; it put steel bands about his identity to preserve it eternally in this living, peopled world —even if as no more than a "black sex-murderer."

But don't you feel the awful wrongness in a social system wherein any living human has to believe that he has committed a gruesome murder to ensure his identity as a human being? . . .

Joseph H. Cole of New York contributed a long letter criticizing the book on both artistic and political grounds:

. . . Lest subsequent comment appear captious, it might be wisest to declare here that *Native Son* achieves positive greatness by its profoundly human characterization of the sociological phenomenon of national oppression. This achievement transcends specific Negro oppression and universalizes the reactions of any ostracized people. . . .

Now why did Richard Wright deliberately select a Bigger to portray an American native son? . . . Wright took the worst case that could possibly be made against his people and attempted to demonstrate that even the brutality of a "black ape murderer" could be explained in terms of national discrimination and oppression. And if a case can be made out for Bigger, then Wright's people are automatically acquitted of whatever lesser "crimes" their (and our) enemies may lodge against them. For me, Wright has made out that case; I put the book down feeling guilty of my skin. My experiences in the progressive movement, however, may have made me atypical; would the Book-of-the-Month-Club reader react similarly?

To put the best possible face on things, let us assume he would. He would feel guilty for reducing the entire Negro people to Biggers—which is what Max calls them: they're Bigger "multiplied by twelve million." Would not the novel reader lacking in class-consciousness feel that while the fault may ultimately lie at the portals of the white ruling class, nevertheless Negroes are now Biggers, and the better part of valor would be to avoid them?

. . . The plot falls into the pattern of dramatic melodrama: suspense is generated by horror and its problematical consequences: what is going to happen next? Interest is captured, sustained, and heightened by swift shocking action: fights, murders, chases, gun duels, etc. In such a setup, it is constructional A, B, C that description, stream of consciousness, *monologue interieur,* author's comment, or bald exposition is about as arresting as the matron describing her operation while a blonde wriggles invitingly across the room. Whatever points will be made will be made by the action and not by comments upon it.

Therefore, when the final impression of *Native Son* is championed as progressive because such-and-such sections express very advanced ideas, the irrefutable reply is that which discloses the meaning of the plot. To defend the book on the basis of the explicit statements it contains is as fallacious as championing a film on the grounds that, while the visuals may have been reactionary, the accompanying sound was not. But on the screen visuals are infinitely more consequential than sound, and in a melodrama action impresses, not commentary.

The action of *Native Son* is completely at loggerheads with what must have been the author's intentions. A Negro kills a white girl accidentally, seeks to pin the blame on an idiotic Communist, rapes and murders his own colored sweetheart in order to insure his chances for escape, and finally is captured and condemned. As sympathetic as I was toward Bigger, his rape and murder of Bessie convinced me that this man was a killer, was dangerous, and should be removed from society. Can you imagine what the Book-of-the-Month-Club reader felt?

Of course, it is true that sandwiched among those crimes, Richard Wright tells the reader why the boy did what he did, what he was thinking of at the time, and how this behavior may be justified by a repellent mystical conception of "creation." Evidently the author himself appreciated that these interpolations were insufficient because the denouement contains an interminable speech rehashing the same explications. Needless to note, Mr. Book-of-the-Month-Club Reader began skipping this superimposed commentary after the end of the first act ("Fear"), impatiently continued skipping it through "Flight," and thumbed nervously through Max's confused defense.

Which is just as well, for—as Mr. Davis pointed out—that speech in and of itself is pretty bad. And it has been generally agreed that the last third of the story is a decided letdown. At this point it is relevant to ask: why so? The answer, I believe, is that the author was switched off the main line of his argument (i.e., Bigger is the worst possible product of national oppression) to a subsidiary and erroneous one: not even the best-intentioned white person can understand the Bigger issue.

I know that sounds almost libelous, but I believe it is not unwarranted. *Not a single white character in* Native Son *has any appreciation of what goes on inside of Bigger.* [Do the *Negro* characters: Reverend Hammond, Bigger's mother, etc.?—S. S.] Jan is an unbelievable *Schlemiel* whose falsity has already been exposed. Only Max is left, and Max is the answer to the weakness of "Fate."

Why was his speech so bad? Even assuming that Wright couldn't do a better job (a completely unwarranted assumption), he had at his disposal expert legal advice, which he chose not to use. Wright *wanted* that speech to be weak, because he wanted to show that not even well-intentioned Max could appreciate the meaning of Bigger's acts.

How else explain Max's fear of Bigger in the last scene? Why should an ILD lawyer *fear* Bigger's awakening? He might pity, yes, but why fear? And Max is afraid, clearly, specifically afraid. The answer, I believe, is—Mike Gold to the contrary notwithstanding—that Max is no Communist. Ben Davis clearly showed that he did not conduct his defense according to Communist tactics. In short, he is a Jewish Clarence Darrow —a humane member of another persecuted minority and an honest liberal. Therefore, when he perceives the *revolutionary* significance of Bigger's awakening, he is afraid; when he defends Bigger, he is mystical. . . .

Millicent Lang of New York came to radically different conclusions from those of Mr. Cole:

I certainly agreed with your review of *Native Son* in which you pointed out that one cannot separate its esthetic and social effects. As I read this splendid novel myself, I felt that a proper understanding of it depends precisely on the extent to which we apprehend this relation within the form of the book. And indeed, as a corollary, the criticisms we can make of it derive from the occasional lapse of control over this unity by Wright himself.

It is obvious that a bare account of the events of this story, the total action of which covers at most a couple of weeks, won't tell us anything about what Wright has done. The tremendous emotional pressure, the almost explosive force of this novel has transformed the lurid but hackneyed crime story of murder and retribution. This is not merely a matter of literary skill in the narrow sense, although in its tight helical construction, in the furious brilliance of the prose itself, Wright has been remarkable. If we read this work carefully we find it fraught with a certain and positive meaning. I believe that a great deal of the confusion about this story of Bigger Thomas has been due to the fact that this insistent direction has been ignored. The novel has been discussed from the point of view of plot alone and, as you point out, that leaves us exposed to any one of various interpretations, the varying reactions to any event as event, as life. Yet continually this narrative is conditioned, is interpreted, by the form of the communication.

Let us examine a relatively minor incident, the prophetic prologue in which Bigger battles a huge slum rat that infests the family's one-room apartment and afterward brutally terrorizes his sister, Vera. Peter Monro Jack, who wrote the review in the Sunday *Times,* comments, "His intent destruction of the rat is a characteristic act," characteristic, that is, "of any moral coward, black or white, who tries to turn himself into a tough braggart." Is that all our writer has said? Ben Davis, Jr., in his review in the *Sunday Worker* says that the rat is symbolic "of the capitalist monster which devours the Negro people with peculiar relish." Yet even Davis has reacted to the story as a whole simply as plot, although the interpretation he applies has social truth. But the author has already phrased the central core of the novel carefully and precisely for us. "He knew that the moment he allowed himself to feel to its fullness how they lived, the shame and misery of their lives, he would be swept out of himself with fear and despair. So he held towards them an attitude of iron reserve; he lived with them, but behind a wall, a curtain. And towards himself he was even more exacting. He knew that the moment he allowed what his life meant to enter his consciousness he would either kill himself or kill someone else. So he denied himself and acted tough." And *that* is the prophecy.

If the book is read attentively we will see the deliberate way in which Wright has weighted each incident. As a result, a total human figure emerges, passionate and sensitive, desirous of the fullness of life's measure, and denied. The repulsiveness of Bigger's brief career, the horrible physical details of the murders, the callousness to poor Bessie, seem to constitute an outer story to which this inner Bigger of the novel as a whole (not merely of the plot) is opposed.

In revolutionary novel and story writing there is a sort of plot-cliche of "coming to realization." We are acquainted with the character who through class sufferings achieves a sense of unity with his fellows. The danger of this pattern has always been of a certain unreality. Only a small percentage of the Negro people as yet fully understand the real cause for their oppression. Wright's book is a sort of tragic inversion of this and in its way just as exceptional. For Bigger, after he has accidentally killed Mary, enters into a new realm of emotional freedom. A new sense of being, of expressing, of "creating." He exults: Who would have thought that *he,* a poor timid black boy would kill and burn the body of a rich white girl. Everyone seems "blind" to him. "He felt that he had destiny in his grasp. He was more alive than he could

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ever remember having been; his mind and attention were pointed, focused towards a goal. For the first time in his life he moved consciously between two sharply defined poles. He was moving away from the threatening penalty of death, from the deathlike thoughts that had brought him that tightness and hotness in his chest, and he was moving towards that sense of fullness that he had so often but inadequately felt in magazines and movies." How pertinent is his lawyer's question, "Why did this boy kill?" His sending of the ransom notes is, again, not cupidity but part of the same desire for expression, for control. "They were crowding me too close," he tells Max.

Wright has been criticized for making so extreme a case as Bigger's a symbol of the oppressed Negro and we have heard the rejoinder that Bigger is, of course, not a symbol since he is obviously not typical. Is not Richard Wright himself a Negro? Yet we know that it was merely a chance congruence of circumstances that imposed this sequence of violence on Bigger. If Mrs. Dalton had not walked into Mary's room he might never have been outwardly different from Gus or J. H. or Jack, his pals in misery and petty thieving. I think that Wright *has* made an attempt to create a symbol of the oppressed Negro people, fully recognizing that Bigger is *not a normal type.* We cannot ignore the unmistakable suggestions of generalization in Bigger's own expressions, in the speech of Max and Jan, and in Wright's own interpolations. But again this hero is a sort of terrible counter-image of the class-conscious Negro. There is almost a threat of floodwater, something larger than life-size in the figure of Bigger Thomas. "We're all murderers to them," another Negro says. And at the end he shocks his Communist lawyer by saying desperately, "It makes me feel I was kind of right." Yes, this Bigger Thomas will terrify. I think he was meant to. "He felt that all of his life had been leading to something like this."

Joel Shaw criticizes my interpretation of Bigger Thomas:

Samuel Sillen maintains in his second article in NEW MASSES that "the difference between Wright's dramatic realism and naturalism is connected with a difference in their conception of the role of personality in fiction. In *Native Son* the social pressures meet the resistance of a positive and creative individual. There is a revolutionary potential in Bigger, however frustrated or perverted it may be by the discriminatory order in which he lives." The storm of esthetic and political evaluation that has followed the wide circulation of *Native Son* revolves particularly about this contention of Sillen's. Is Wright's characterization of Bigger Thomas motivated by "dramatic realism"? If so, then we have the answer to the esthetic-political question as to whether or not Bigger is "a positive and creative individual," yes, even a "revolutionary potential."

How dramatically real is Bigger? To be sure, every characterization of a writer is "real." The "stuff" of the artist is always drawn from the physical world. But this axiomatic truth does not imply that the subject matter of any creative artist is, ipso facto, a true representation of reality. The author of any work of art has a broader fidelity to his esthetic conceptions. From the Marxist viewpoint, esthetics and politics are dialectical opposites; they are obverse sides of the dynamic interpenetration of ideology and political economy.

Bigger can be dramatically real in only one sense. Is he representative of his people? The answer is given by Wright who maintains that Bigger multiplied twelve million times represents

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the Negro people as a whole. Yet the characterization of Bigger in *Native Son* is as esthetically false as it is politically confused. In *Native Son* Bigger is a frustrated, anti-social individual who commits anarchic acts of violence in his blind rebellion against capitalist society. It is politically slanderous to contend that Bigger Thomas is the symbol of the Negro people. Consequently it is an esthetic falsity to select a character who is atypical and to make him the protagonist of a novel that deals with the bitter persecution and exploitation of a minority people in bourgeois society.

In the light of Bigger's acts of extreme individualism, it is difficult to understand how Sillen draws the conclusion that Bigger is "a positive and creative individual," and a "revolutionary potential." If Bigger is potentially revolutionary, Angelo Herndon is an active Garveyite!

Wright's basic misconception of Bigger is responsible for the political and esthetic contradictoriness that is inherent in *Native Son.* Bigger is Wright's native son, but the reader feels that Bigger represents a distortion or caricature of anti-capitalist Negro feeling. It is for this reason, that the motivation that brings Bigger and Jan together in the early scene of the book is mechanical. The objective situation is unreal, Bigger is unreal subjectively, consequently, Jan too becomes a blurred image.

There is so much good writing in *Native Son* that one feels that Wright has great talent; mixed with this attitude is the regret that his native son had to be so poorly conceived—a conception that cancels out the vigor and breathless suspense of his quickened prose.

The invitation is still open. Your comments on *Native Son* and the literary and social problems which the book raises are highly welcome. They will be published in subsequent issues of the magazine.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Inside the Alcazar

THE BRAVE AND THE BLIND, *by Michael Blankfort. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.50.*

MICHAEL BLANKFORT has performed an astonishing tour de force in this novel about the siege of the Toledo Alcazar by the forces of the Spanish republic. It is written almost entirely from *inside* the fortress immortalized by El Greco's great painting, and the story is presented almost entirely through characters indifferent or inimical to the loyalist government of Spain. Therein—since the book is a strongly pro-loyalist document—lies the cause for astonishment and the tour de force.

During the seventy-one days of the siege the great newspapers of the world presented to their readers a largely concocted story of this dramatic event in the Spanish war. All siege is essentially dramatic and the drama is not dependent on the convictions of those besieged. Since that time, especially since the Alcazar garrison was rescued by General Franco's forces, our information about the event has been supplied by avowedly fascist sympathizers, notably Geoffrey MacNeill-Moss' *The Siege of the Alcazar,* and Rodolphe Timmermann's *Heroes of the Alcazar.* Relatively few writers have testified on the other side, for no writers sympathetic to the repub-

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lic were in the Alcazar to report events. But gradually we have learned something of what happened there. We have learned, for instance, that the fascist troops occupying the fortress in the first days of the rebellion took with them into the rock hundreds of government hostages, with whom they attempted (and successfully) to purchase their own lives. There were literally hundreds of men, women, and children in the Alcazar who were tortured, executed, starved with the besieged. Loyalist women suffered rape, gave birth and died. Men and women had been torn from their husbands and wives and herded into the fortress, with the shrewd certainty that the besieging forces would withhold their fire. For sixty-odd days the government forces urged the garrison to surrender, or at least to send out their women and children. This was refused. And the government was mining the fortress and had exploded a few mines when the Franco forces recaptured the town and the Alcazar itself. The true humanity of the government forces, in fact, assured the recapture of Toledo and the further advances made by Franco, for the government could readily have taken all Toledo and advanced its lines against the enemy had it not been so concerned with the lives of those held prisoner by the "heroes" of the Alcazar—the fascist army garrison, the Falangists, the notorious Civil Guard.

Such is the setting for Blankfort's moving novel, and such is the story he presents. All his characters (with one exception), he tells us, are invented; he must be taken at his word. And he must be accorded high praise for the approximation to the truth he has achieved through these fictional people. The exception is the government commander Major (later General) Rojo, who arranged a truce, interviewed the real commander of the Alcazar, Moscardo, and delivered the government ultimatum—too late.

In the persons of a fascist journalist, a young army officer ("non-political"), the respective commanders of the army and the Falangists (convinced fascists), numerous civilians, peasants, hostages—Anarchist, Communist and Catholic—the story is told. It is a gripping and horrible story of ultimate privation and suffering, and it cannot fail to move you or to convince the least susceptible of the purity and honesty of the cause of the republic. The author's sympathies as a novelist and a man go naturally to all and he has achieved remarkable objectivity; in fact the extent of his objectivity proves again that the truth, in so far as it can be apprehended, is the best propaganda. For he has shown us the nature of fascist "conviction" in the persons of his commander and the commander of the Falangists. He has shown us the nature of human failings in the wavering of his journalist, his young army officer (who almost, but not quite, deserted); he shows it to us in his vacillating French Communist (convinced in the head, but not in the heart), the real Communist (his wife), the young cadet who changed his mind and was executed for it,

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the priest who died with him because he too was ultimately on the side of the people, the civilians who were bewildered and bent whichever way the wind blew.

Many of these people, it is true, are not explored so deeply as one might have wished, nor as is required by the exigencies of truly profound characterization. But they are close enough to human beings we all know to provide the illusion of reality and so to move you by their predicament and their inner conflicts. They are, truly, the brave and the blind; and Blankfort has shown us with sensitivity and perception wherein lay their bravery and what was the source of their blindness.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Patient's Odyssey

I GO HORIZONTAL, *by Duff Gilfond. Vanguard Press. $2.50.*

SEVEN years ago Duff Gilfond, an active Washington journalist of exceptionally vigorous health, woke up one morning with an excruciating pain in her head. Then began her long heartbreaking and costly odyssey among the doctors. She submitted to scores of examinations and tests at the hands of every kind of specialist, but no diagnosis was reached. Since no doctor would accept the tests of another, she was frequently repeating the same tests. The racking pain, which she calls "The Cloud," was always with her and she could achieve temporary surcease only by "going horizontal." Finally she came to the "Great Man" who diagnosed sleeping sickness and promised a cure if she followed his treatments. For a few years she lived scrupulously under his regime, continually separated from her husband whose work to pay the doctors kept him in another city. But cure did not come and she abandoned all the torments of hospitalizations, tests, and false hopes for country retirement, where she now enjoys occasional remissions from "The Cloud."

Mrs. Gilfond tells her story of pain with courage and humor. Her reflections on the care of the sick in our society are limited but pertinent. She knows she could have been spared much torment, time, and money, were the practice of medicine cooperative and not competitive, and she says to a fellow sufferer, "The choice of a doctor in cases like ours is the job of trained men with a public not a private interest in us . . . doctors have to cooperate and not compete with each other." But her surprise is somewhat naive when she learns that lack of government interest and consequent lack of funds for research retard knowledge of sleeping sickness. She is "aghast, unable to believe," when the "Great Man" tells her on her last visit, "The government has failed us. Yes, the government which appropriates millions of dollars for a battleship, but which never gave me a cent to find out what this is all about."

CORA MACALBERT.

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William Saroyan: Requiescat

Alvah Bessie says, "His catchpenny eagerness has burst its bonds and betrayed him." . . . Bechet recordings . . . Ishigaki paints for the people.

I WOULD like to revise my estimate of William Saroyan, as previously stated in a review of *The Time of Your Life*. I said there that he was about 25 percent genuine, 75 percent phony. In *Love's Old Sweet Song* (at the Plymouth), the current theater's first exhibitionist and simultaneous winner of the Drama Critics Circle and Pulitzer Prizes for 1940, makes it amply evident that I grossly overestimated his integrity. For in three hateful acts our daring young man reveals three interesting facts. They are (1) that he is a fraud; (2) that he is a calculated, if not overly brilliant, court jester; and, most important, (3) that he is a vicious and conscious enemy of human dignity, as any decent human being will understand it.

It is not enough that the play he has written might readily have dropped its final curtain at any point in the first act, for the sum total is the quintessence of piffle. It rambles, it dawdles, it is thoroughly boring and has utterly nothing to say. It is not of ultimate importance that every line, every situation, every so-called idea is intended to titillate the convictions and the susceptibilities of the sort of people who have paid Mr. Saroyan very well for his mindless nonsense and whose money he is still after. (For that is, after all, *his* business.) But it *is* finally important that the whole thing is in atrocious taste in its handling of human beings; that it is so offensive in its understanding of people as to nauseate even a Liberty Leaguer.

The plot? A middle-aged spinster falls in love with a pitchman on the basis of a phony telegram he did not send; he flees when a family of "Okies" takes over her house and wrecks it; he comes back to her after all. Tossed in here and there are assorted messenger boys, Greek wrestlers, a *Time* salesman, a *Life* photographer, a "socially conscious" novelist, a farmer, two pimps, what have you. These people mill around the stage, talk interminably in wisecracks that were old before the man (who recently signed himself "A Crazy Armenian" in a greeting to a certain organization) was out of diapers. What they have to say, what they do, has no relation to people as we know them; they are used as springboards for Mr. Saroyan's self-praised attitude toward the world, and they lack even that element of light-hearted funmaking that was present in analogous characters in the author's two previous theater pieces. They are a bore. And the play in which they disport themselves moves slowly toward its denouement. It drops its curtain twice in the process, at what seem thoroughly arbitrary points; then it resumes again and laboriously crawls to its end. It is so hopelessly contrived that Saroyan's much celebrated spontaneity is never in evidence for a moment.

In the days when Saroyan was first on the make he flirted with the left wing movement. Then, as now, he would and did write anything for anyone who would publish him. Such an attitude is death to any man, writer or no writer, and it culminates in the many scenes in this play in which Saroyan makes sport of his "Okies." With a shrewd understanding of the forces that pay off in this world (and those that do not) he has chosen to present these people as mindless, degenerate, lazy, lecherous, filthy, clownish. Their excuse for taking over the spinster's home is a "charming": "We just want to rest a spell and take a breath of air." When it is protested that they have no right to do this, the father "Okie" replies, "the whole country's behind us." When accused of being a bunch of bums, he wakes out of sleep again, says "Migratory workers," and drops off. Finally, they burn down the house and move on. Why work? They refuse a farmer's offer. "I'm too old," says the old man, the oldest son "gets tard easy," the mother is expecting a sixteenth child and the rest are too young.

Now Saroyan knows what he is after, but he has overplayed his hand. His treatment of these people, whose activities constitute the bulk of the play's action, is so vicious, and human decency is so basic, that even a well dressed audience liberally and spontaneously hissed him. Nor could this business be excused on any reasonable grounds of "humor," "satire," or social commentary. It is so fundamentally tasteless as to be obscene, physically nauseating.

A good word should be said for the work of Jessie Royce Landis as the spinster, Alan Hewitt as the *Time* salesman, Doro Merande and Arthur Hunnicutt as the parent "Okies," and a host of unidentifiable but charming children. It is astonishing to find so accomplished a player as Walter Huston unable to hold your attention, but no man could speak these lines and interest you—they are redundant, endless, sophomoric, philosophical bombast. But all these people deserve your sympathy; they are accomplished performers who have been forced to take work in a play that dishonors their profession.

Despite the fact that *The Time of Your Life* has just won the Drama Critics Circle and Pulitzer Prizes for this year, I will lay odds that the boy is finished. So pervasive is his desire for applause that it is impossible for anyone who has followed him even to credit the drop of truth he injects into his refusal of the Pulitzer award—that he does not approve of monetary prizes for works of art because they debase the artist and his work. For his catchpenny eagerness has burst its bonds and betrayed him: he will write anything, say anything, do anything he thinks will celebrate his name. And I doubt that he he is really smart enough to play that game. Requiescat.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Bechet Concerti

New recorded works by Sidney Bechet and Muggsy Spanier.

IT IS doubtful whether there is another figure in the history of jazz quite so remarkable as Sidney Bechet. This dignified workman of American folk music has played out a normal career in obscurity and now that his contemporaries, save the great Louis, are dead or retired Bechet is recording an autumnal harvest of enduring American music. Bechet is associated with Negro jazz and because there are snobs and blind men in official charge of radio and concert music he is now only the property of the jazz cognoscenti.

Bechet has made the soprano saxophone his instrument. Very few others dare to play it, but he makes the world respect it, if not emulate it. Bechet's range on this bastard of the clarinet and Adolph Sax's odd instrument is astounding. He will play almost as high as Teschmacher's clarinet and again he plays so that one almost suspects a baritone saxophone. Years of night-in and night-out playing have given him the most disarming ease in changing register in the middle of a note, accenting a long note so subtly it sounds like a series of short stabbing notes, or shading off a series of repetitive phrases so variously that one is borne along with his melodic idea. He has more breath than Guy Lombardo's sax men put together and he rivals Armstrong in his completely personal intonation—the individual, unmistakable voice that occurs in great jazz musicians.

Both Blue Note and the Hot Record Society have made twelve-inch Bechet items lately. HRS goes whole hog with eight twelve-inch sides by the Bechet-Spanier quartet, including Carmen Mastren, guitar; Wellman Braud, string bass; and Muggsy Spanier, trumpet.

The idea of recording Muggsy and Bechet together was an inspiration. Inspirations have a 90 percent chance of missing, but Steve Smith of HRS took no chances on Muggsy and Bechet together. Like Sidney Bechet, Muggsy is fiercely devoted to the jazz tradition. Muggsy was an early luminary of Chi-

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cago jazz, when the New Orleans music inflamed the young white Chicagoans. Like Bechet he was forgotten in the big swing revival but he trumpeted his way back with a notable set of Bluebird records last year. The accompaniment by Carmen Mastren and Wellman Braud is poor but we can forget the quibble in the wonderful music the lead trumpet and saxophone make together.

The numbers were rehearsed only once and Mastren made a skeleton arrangement before the disks were cut. This was neither help nor hindrance to Bechet since he reads not a note of music. Muggsy and Bechet play together as aptly as Louis and Bechet must have in the early days in New Orleans, if we may judge from the two or three existing recorded documents of the spring days of jazz.

Bechet takes another direction in the Blue Note sides: *Dear Old Southland, Lonesome Blues, Bechet's Steady Rider,* and *Saturday Night Blues,* the last pair of titles on ten-inch disks. Here the attempt is to frame a concerto for Bechet; the trumpet is missing. The rhythm instruments are Teddy Bunn's guitar, George "Pops" Foster's bass, and Sidney Catlett's drums, a magnificent section. Blue Note is concerned with finding a formula to bridge the fading orchestral improvisation of jazz and the unknown shore the jazz idea must find to survive. The blues, never a nationally respected music, is still strong among musicians of the Teddy Bunn caliber—young men who do not play the blues as a nostalgia survival but as a musical idiom useful to their own ideas.

Blue Note's carefully fostered records lean strongly on the blues. This series of records indicates that the direction is right. Young Teddy Bunn, who plays jive music with a string orchestra, is a very moving artist. He plays single string notes of great folk feeling, as atmospheric as a black Alabama swamp. Sidney Catlett is a magnificent drummer, an elemental force in the blues. One thinks of great driving wheels, a distant surf, the shuffling of a hundred feet, or a gang of stake drivers wielding their alternate hammers, as Catlett falls into the beat, recovers, and drives another behind the steady roll of the band in *Lonesome Blues.*

Bechet also appears on a new Bluebird version of *Indian Summer* and *Preachin' the Blues,* which offer a shorter glimpse of his genius—and a 35 cent glimpse, which means a great deal these days.

JAMES DUGAN.

Eitaro Ishigaki

Exhibition of oil paintings at the ACA Gallery.

THE current exhibition of Eitaro Ishigaki's paintings at the ACA Gallery is of great interest. This artist's work has in the past few years shown a steady development in richness and subtlety of color and freedom of emotional expression. Three pictures of the war in China are exquisite in their expressive unity of color and form with emotion and idea. *Flight,* a tiny picture large with beauty, recalls, without imitativeness, its descent from the past, as a child recalls its parents. In *Victims of War* the little figure of a woman with a baby, thrown to the ground by the butt of a soldier's rifle, boils with resentment and pain, and the ingenious spiral composition whirls the observer's emotions around seeking an outlet, as the emotions of the victim are whirled. A powerful identity of sensation is set up in the observer; more than this a picture cannot do, although some pictures do it in a greater range than others. In the same way *The Wind* sucks the observer into its vortex along with the three victims, but this time in a three dimensional whirl very beautifully deepened in space.

A series of little pictures of small boys with cows is delightful. In *Boy Riding Cow* a boy wanders into a hilly landscape, playing a little red flute. *Boy Taming Cow* has a powerful arrested movement, recalling Goya, and an extraordinarily rich play of rose, green, and violet in its, at first sight, drab color scheme. *Boy Capturing Cow* is an amazing little affair in which a boy, a tornado, and an infuriated cow do a sort of wild dance alone on the bare earth.

Ishigaki shows a suppressed intensity of emotion which sometimes has a terrific struggle to get out at all; when occasionally he paints without this emotion his pictures are not always interesting. But he seldom does so, and his steady development in harnessing this whirlwind to his purposes seems symbolized in *Boy Capturing Cow.*

This artist is indeed a "people's artist"; the emotions of the people are felt in the marrow of his bones and pity, resentment, terror are given back in color and movement, a deeper and more moving form of propaganda than statistics or reports.

LYDIA GIBSON.

FLIGHT. *One of twenty-six paintings by Eitaro Ishigaki on exhibition at the ACA Gallery, 52 West 8th St., New York City. This picture of a Chinese family fleeing from the bombs of the Japanese invader is a Japanese-American's contribution to the cause of the Chinese people. The exhibition will last through May 18.*

Music Festival

Benefit for Spanish refugee relief features American contemporaries.

THE old gag about the little girl who, on being introduced to a composer, remarked, "Gosh, I thought all composers are dead," was recalled to mind on the occasion of the American Music Festival. This event, sponsored by the Dorothy Parker Committee to Aid Spanish Refugee Children and given at Mecca Temple, was of far greater importance than appears on the surface.

As far as the "legitimate" concert circles are concerned most contemporary composers are dead. A study of programs presented by our large symphony orchestras and the Met reveals an insignificant number of American works performed. In the theater, literature, and painting, the contemporaries performed are in a healthy majority. Concert programs, however, contain over 90 per cent of the works of composers who died before 1900. In short, the concert hall has become a museum where the old masterpieces are viewed. This state of affairs did not always exist. The old mas-

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ters despite numerous difficulties had ample opportunities to hear their works performed. This was useful for both composer and audience: the composer could estimate his work from a more objective position while learning the responses of his listeners and the audience, in constant contact with all the current trends, matured in discrimination and enjoyed richer musical experiences.

We should therefore be grateful to the sponsors of this festival for providing an opportunity for challenging the silly contention that people don't like modern composers. Despite the handicap of an unruly "mike," an overlengthy program, and a poor section arrangement (the demands of the concert section should logically have preceded the lighter theater section), it was obvious that everybody was keenly interested in what the American composer had to say. Besides an American folk song group which included the splendid American Ballad Singers and a final swing session by the excellent Teddy Wilson Quartet, the composers represented were Alex North, Paul Creston, Jerome Moross, Harold Rome, Morton Gould, Elie Siegmeister, Earl Robinson, and Marc Blitzstein. There were too many numbers to allow detailed criticism here but special mention should be reserved for the lovely musical setting by Alex North to Langston Hughes' "Mother," Elie Siegmeister's charming "Johnny Appleseed" beautifully sung by Emile Renan, the Paul Creston saxophone sonata, and the section of "The People, Yes" by Earl Robinson. Although all the composers have highly individual styles and their different approaches produce varying success they have in common the desire to reflect the complete American scene, an amazingly high level of expressive powers, and a profound knowledge of their craft.

There is a sun rising on the musical horizon and we saw some of its rays at the American Music Festival.

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GOINGS ON

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DEBATE ON THE NEGROES AND THE WAR—Subject: "SHALL NEGROES, ESPECIALLY BRITISH COLONIALS, SUPPORT THE ALLIES IN THE PRESENT WAR?" Affirmative: A. W. Domingo; Negative: Richard B. Moore. SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2:30 P.M., at Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, 2nd floor. Admission 25c.

NEW DANCE GROUP RECITAL OF SONG & DANCE. Anita Alvarez, Dorothy Bird, Lotte Goslar, Nona Schurman, Benjamin Zemach Ensemble, Atkins, Kleinsinger, Leadbelly, Woody. BENEFIT "Okies" & New Dance Group Scholarship Fund, SUNDAY, MAY 19, 8:45—Heckscher Theatre. Tickets: New Dance Group, 17 W. 24, Heckscher Thea. night May 19. 55, 83, 1.10.

SENDER GARLIN speaks on THE TRUTH BEHIND THE NEWS—Midtown Forum, Hotel Monterey, 94 St. & B'way—SUN., MAY 19th, 9:00 P.M. Adm. 25c.

ALFRED GOLDSTEIN, popular political analyst, reviews THE NEWS OF THE WEEK every SUNDAY EVENING at Workers School, 2nd floor, 35 East 12 Street. Admission 25c.

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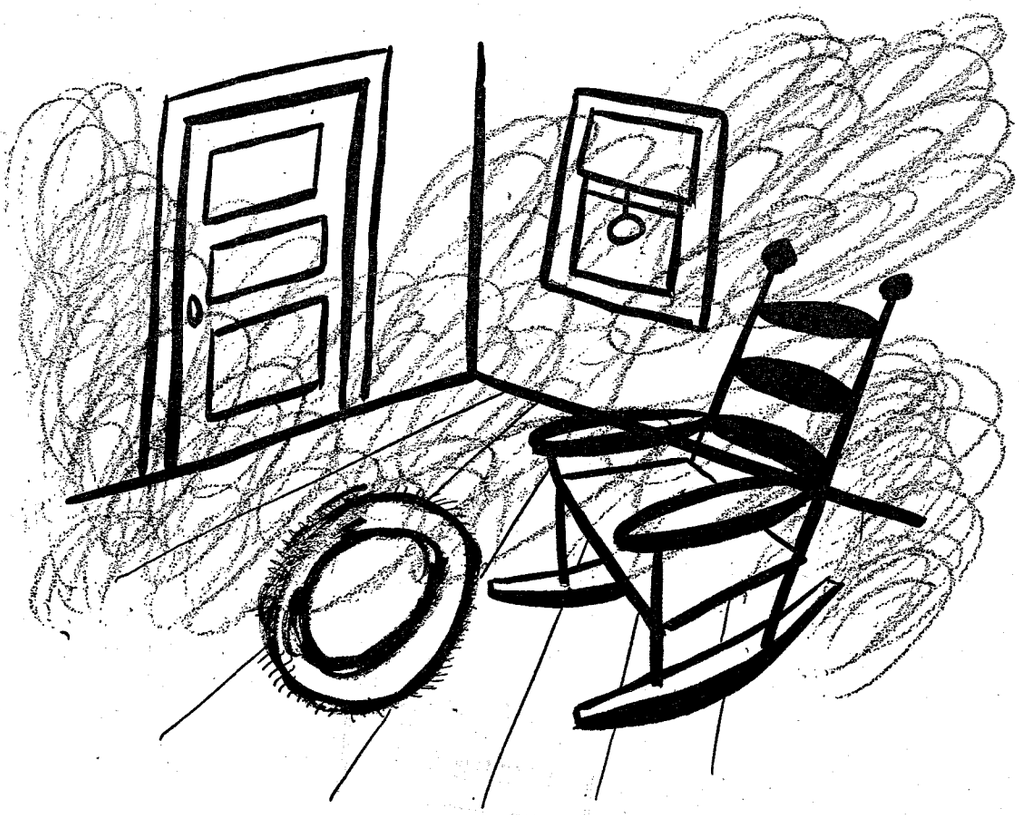

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The Democratic presidential aspirants, a series of two articles by JAMES MORISON.

A revaluation of the Roosevelt administration by A. B. MAGIL.

The conventions.—Three NEW MASSES editors, JOSEPH NORTH, RUTH McKENNEY, and A. B. MAGIL, will cover the party conventions. Mr. North and Miss McKenney will cover the Communist convention, which opens in New York, May 30; Mr. Magil will be at the Republican and Democratic conventions in June and July.

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